

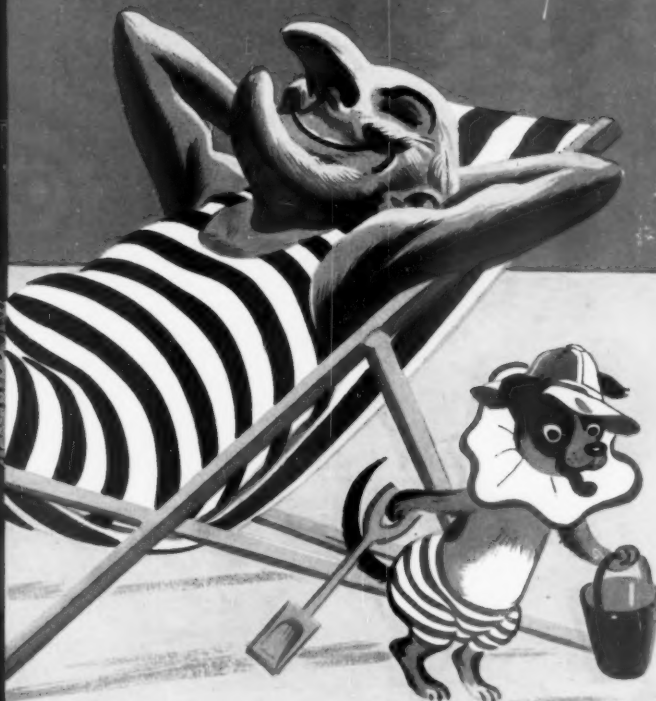
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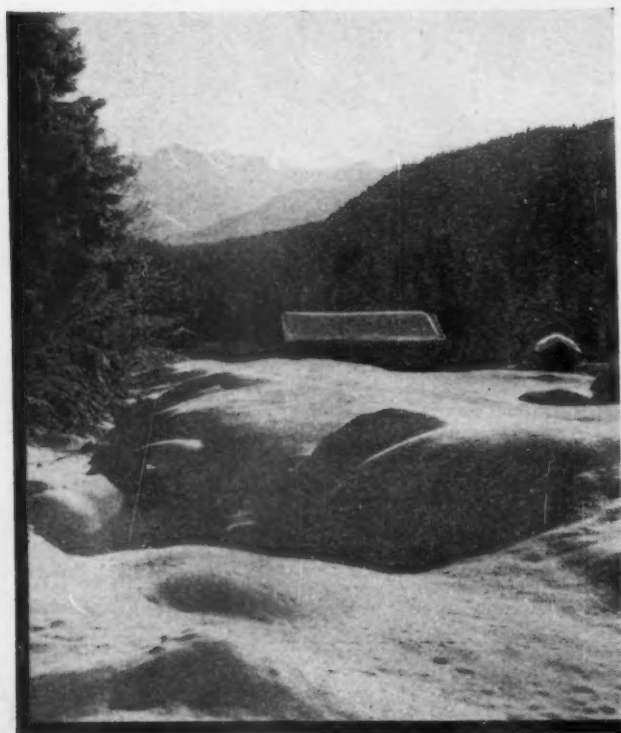
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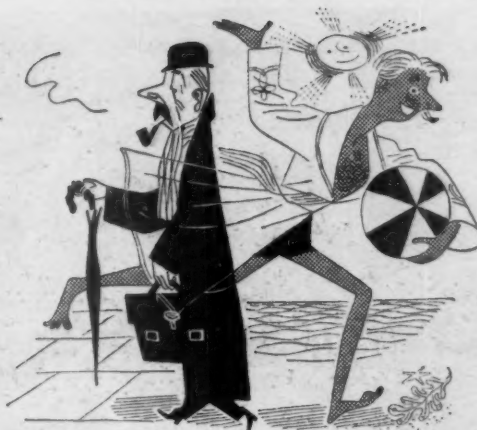
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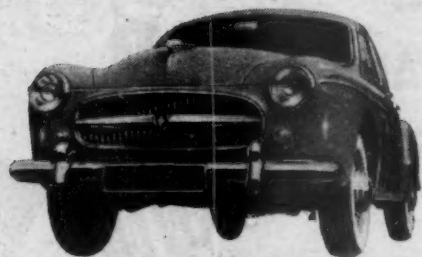


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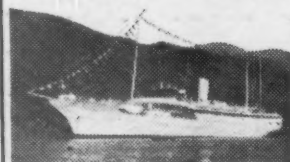
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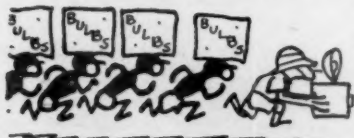
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the report continues that "the whole thing is like a military operation" and "those in charge . . . speak of 'battle headquarters.'"

Bocca Non Bacciata

An interesting pointer to current newspaper protocol appeared recently in the *Daily Express*. Lady Astor, very quick off the mark, had complained that the biography by Geoffrey Bocca now being serialized in the *Sunday Express* was not authorized by her; whereupon Mr. Bocca answered, apparently with pride, "I did not meet Lady Astor personally. I did, however, have several telephone talks and some correspondence in which she made clear her opposition to my project."

The Servile Cake

LET no one think that royalty is immune to-day from the flattery with which it was wooed in other times. "Princess Margaret is the best cake-cutter-up I know," said Mrs. Winifred

Miller at a party at Sadler's Wells recently. It turned out that what she meant was that Princess Margaret had been able without assistance to put a knife into the crack where the cake had been previously sliced for her benefit.

Black Outlook

ELECTORAL procedure in Kenya is likely to be overhauled as a result of the proposals in the Coutts Report, which sets out a long list of suggested voting qualifications. Of the Kikuyu, Meru and Embu tribes the list would in any case include only "proved loyalists," and women would reach it only by way of "a membership badge in a women's club" or a record of "exceptional powers in active fighting against Mau Mau." African feminists are likely to take a poor view of this, which seems tantamount to provoking further serious unrest led by some so-called "Field-Marshal" Pankhurst.

Crowded Sensation

RAILWAY experts, looking forward to the introduction of signalling by automation, are reported to believe that this would make it possible "to manage with three tracks where otherwise four



would be required." Passenger feeling is all for expert planning and improved signalling, but with a rider that more tracks instead of fewer would be welcome just at the moment.

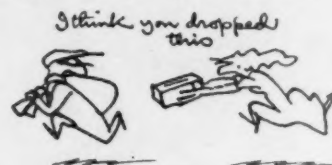
Keep in Touch with H.Q.

COMMUNIST authors, a report from Berlin says, have been instructed that if they write war novels they must show soldiers fighting the evil spirit of

pacifism. Those pretty white doves M. Picasso sent them can easily be adapted to carrying dispatches from the front.

Ted o' My Heart

A YOUTH who made a smash-and-grab raid on a Hornsey shop and then ran away in the fog, says a news item, was



chased for some way by two girls who had been standing near. They probably wanted his autograph.

Faint Damns Only, Please

THE rapidity of Dr. Charles Hill's political ascent, so often overlooked, should perhaps be invoked to explain his rashly immoderate language at Luton last week. No experienced politician describes as "dangerous, crazy balderdash," and a "supremely idiotic fiction," a rumour which could make him look pretty silly if it turned out to be true after all. Young M.P.s, nominated candidates and others might well take as their example Mr. Butler's earlier remarks on the same subject: nothing could have been more diplomatically equivocal than his description of Sir Anthony as "the best Prime Minister we have."

The Sledged Pole-axe on the Ice

IN the South Polar regions a cold war would be even more undesirable than usual; so Moscow radio's recent broadcast drawing attention to the achievements of the Russian explorers Bellingshausen and Lazarev in the Antarctic long before Scott's expedition was launched "amid unhealthy excitement" with the sole object of "satisfying

national vanity" should not be treated lightly by the British, New Zealand or American parties now in those parts.

St. Bradshaw's Day

AMONG prayers offered by Archbishop Richard Cushing of Boston at a recent service was one to "have our railroads run regularly on time and comfortably." Someone might suggest this to Archbishop Ramsey while he still brings a fresh mind to his problems at York.

Collapse of Atom Age

EMANCIPATED folk must have opened their *Daily Sketches* with trembling fingers the other day when they saw it offering "the most exciting family freedom plan of the atom age." It



was undeniably disappointing to learn that the plan was only a scheme by which they minded one another's babies when they went out for the evening.

Love All

WHEN Mr. Randolph Churchill devoted an entire article in the *Evening Standard* to a lot of complaints about the hospitality offered him by Associated-Television on the occasion of his appearance in a programme called "Profile," Associated-Television could either have ignored it with dignity or rebutted it with wit. Instead, they first published details of Mr. Churchill's luncheon menu, then battered their advantage home next day with a verse entitled "What Would Aunt Matilda Have Said?" lamenting the fall of "glorious Blenheim." In order that the verse should make its maximum effect, they added at the foot "Bleheim (*sic*) is the family name of the Churchills."

No News . . .

No news is good news, said the programme contractors,
Let's have more quiz-games and Hollywood actors.
But the News that was no news and smugly faint-hearted
Made news of a kind when Crawley departed.

DARE TO BE A DANIEL?

IMPORTANT truths are very often thrown away nowadays like witty lines in contemporary English comedies, and this is what happened to one touched on lately by a correspondent to *The Times*. "What," asked this correspondent, "is the incentive for any nation to invest huge amounts of capital in transforming rocket ships from comic papers to reality?" Having picked this truth up, Dr. Tanner of the Cavendish Laboratory, for it was he, apparently gave it a cursory look and decided to probe it no further, for there was nothing in the rest of his letter to show that he realized that most of the really imaginative developments in the world appeared in comic papers long before reality would have anything to do with them.

Long before any government had a submarine fleet Jules Verne was pointing the way to them. Where should we be now if Sir Basil Zaharoff had decided not to invest huge amounts of capital in transforming the submarine from *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* to dividends for the Vickers shareholders? And long before the first helicopter arose to the greater glory of Lord Beaverbrook, the Clipper of the Clouds cruised around under its vertical airscrews. The employment of domesticated monkeys for simple tasks, proposed by Professor Sir George Thomson in a book published only last year,

was a commonplace to Tarzan thirty years ago. Even the atomic bomb itself first exploded upon the public from the pages of a novel by Sir Harold Nicolson which, though not strictly speaking a comic paper, was at any rate not an exposition of official policy.

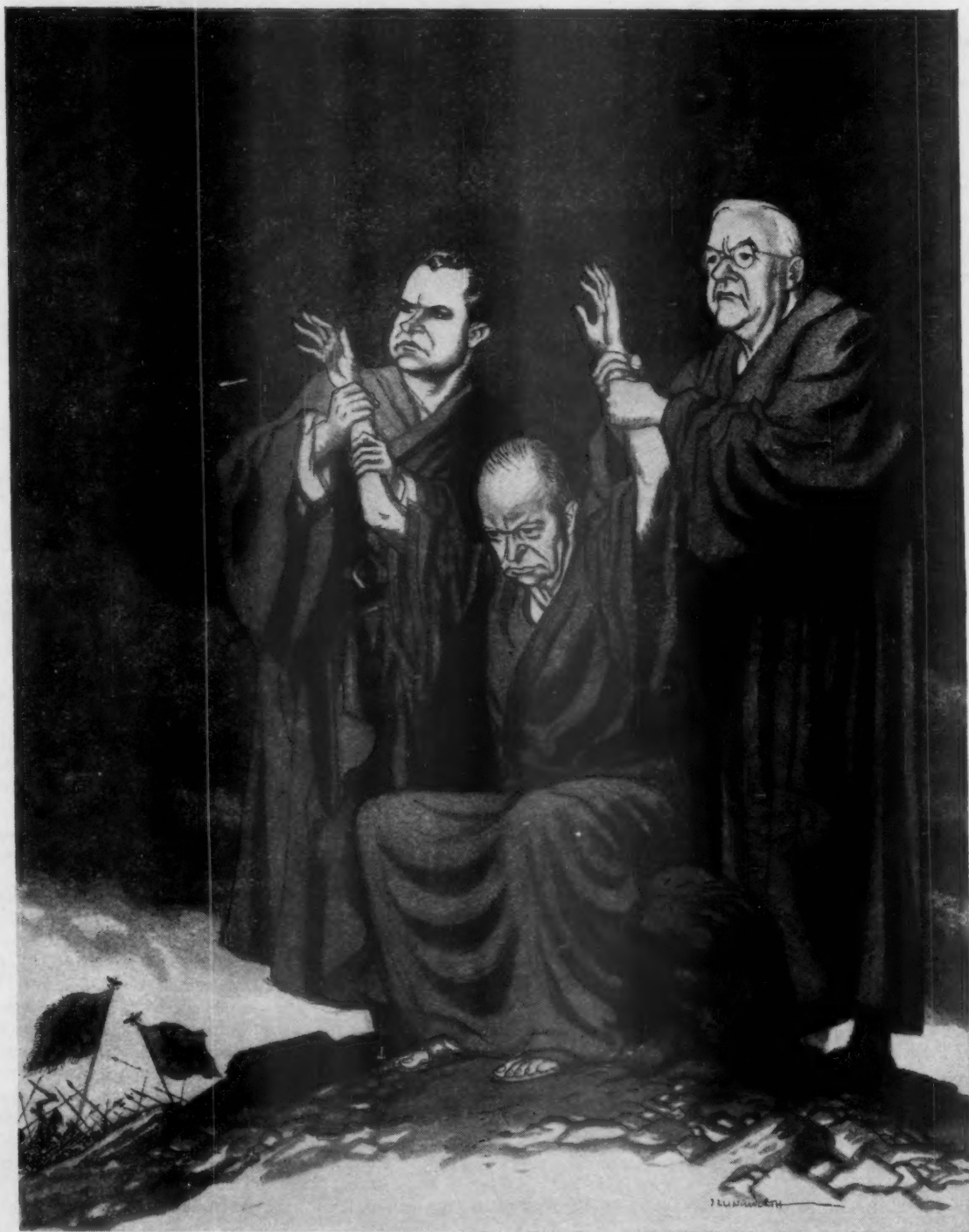
The fact is that boys are much better at solving difficult problems than adults. This is why in some professions, such as the Church and the Army, a certain degree of arrested development is a sure key to success. While great big Peter Pans like Lugard and Livingstone and Kitchener were busy reddening the map of Africa, their exploits must often have seemed utter bilge (to borrow the Astronomer Royal's elegant phrase) to the parsimonious stay-at-homes at Westminster who thought little of continuing to invest huge amounts of capital in the Empire once it had been established that the sun would never set on it.

It is good to see that there are a few Government-sponsored activities under way to-day not unworthy of a place in the comic papers. We have these expeditions going to the South Pole; we are preparing to encircle the earth with artificial satellites; we have machines that play chess and write sonnets. These projects have the right flavour about them.

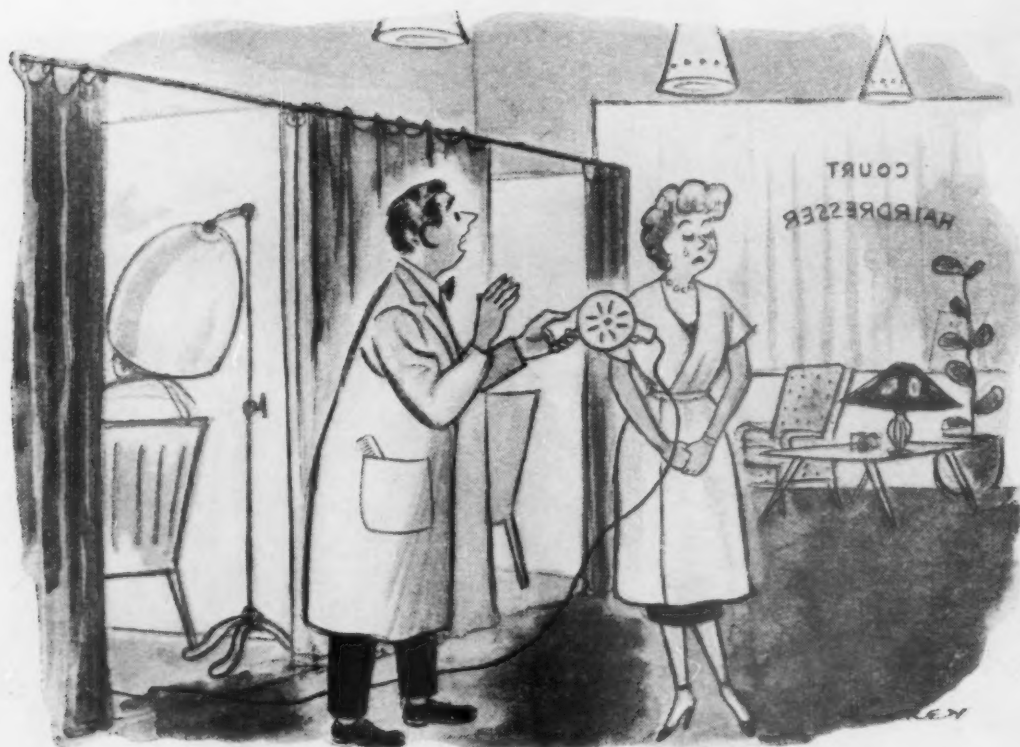
We only need a few more. For every man working on the F.N. rifle which that veteran warrior Mr. Shinwell says is no good, how many are working on the death ray? Where is our anti-gravity research unit? How many lost cities have been found in darkest Africa lately? Who is our Ambassador-designate in Atlantis? It is all very well to laugh at these things; it seems only yesterday that we were laughing at the atom-powered aeroplane, and now it flies around America as large as life and twice as juvenile.

The more one thinks about the ways in which official policy can be influenced, the more the comic papers seem to commend themselves. On any count, Captain Nemo is a nicer character than Bismarck; and it would be a very warped citizen who found more to admire in Henry VIII or Cecil Rhodes or Mussolini than in Dan Dare. B.A.Y.





And it came to pass, when Eisenhower held up his hand, the Republicans prevailed: and when he let down his hand, the Democrats prevailed.



"Oh come, come, Miss Levine. Dry those tears."

That Cliveden Set

By CLAUD COCKBURN

IN those days, if you saw cameramen patrolling St. James's Square at lunch-time or dusk, you could be nearly sure they were there to get a picture of 'The Cliveden Set' going in or out of the Astors' house. In his diary, Geoffrey Dawson, then Editor of *The Times*, comments on the fact with petulance.

If you talked to those lovely girls the Hearst Press used to send over to be news-gatherers, what they wanted to know all about was The Cliveden Set. The Senator from Idaho made a speech about it, and in those London cabarets where libel didn't matter songsters made songs about it.

Editorial writers in Paris and San Francisco discussed it, the foreign editors of *La Prensa* and the *Palestine Post* assessed it. People who wanted to explain everything by something and

were ashamed to say "sunspots" said "The Cliveden Set."

And—strangest aspect of this phenomenon of the 1930s—the members of The Cliveden Set throughout it all furiously or wearily maintained that they were not members because there was no Cliveden Set to be a member of. It was, they asserted, simply the devilish invention of Mr. Claud Cockburn, who had first detonated the explosive phrase in the dirty-looking mimeographed columns of his misguided and misleading newsheet *The Week*.

Admittedly, the fact that I had loosed off something which was causing Lords Lothian and Halifax, Lady Astor, George Bernard Shaw, the perennial Tom Jones, and the Editor of *The Times* to denounce me in public or private—I think it was Shaw who felt compelled to write an article in the *Saturday*

Evening Post saying the whole thing wasn't so—made me feel I must have somehow struck a right note.

Whatever else it was, it certainly was a very interesting lesson in journalism.

As I recall, it was my old friend Vladimir Poliakov—for a good many years Diplomatic Correspondent of *The Times* and special diplomatic commentator for the *New York Times*—who first, perhaps inadvertently, directed my attention to the importance of the political discussions which went on among some of those who met, more or less regularly, at St. James's Square and at the Astors' country house, Cliveden.

With the head of a Slav generalissimo, and a get-up vaguely reminiscent of an Edwardian diplomat, this same Vladimir Poliakov strode and occasionally tiptoed around and about the diplomatic world

of the 'twenties and 'thirties like a cheetah, which duller creatures deem merely picturesque or bizarre until they also note what a turn of speed he has.

Among his other notable qualities was an infinite capacity for taking pains to do everyone, from ambassadors to train conductors, small but unforgettable favours.

I met him for the first time in 1929 when I was tenuouslly attached to *The Times* office in Paris. The atmosphere in the office on that day was sulphurous because the Chief Correspondent, on calling to see the Minister of Foreign Affairs, had been informed by the Chief of Cabinet that "your chief has just been with the Minister for an hour." The supposed "chief" was of course Mr. Poliakov on a quick trip to Paris. By virtue of a certain manner he had he was often taken by foreign statesmen to be the "man behind" everything from Printing House Square to Whitehall, and his sincere denials merely confirmed them in their beliefs.

As a result of this *malentendu* nobody in the office was on speaking terms with anyone else, and I, to my alarm, was left alone with the distinguished Poliakov. I saw him examining me with attention and feared he would ask me high diplomatic questions which I should be unable to answer, and so be discredited.

He said "What you have is the *grippe*. Your temperature—I am not wrong about such things—is a little over a hundred." Astonished, I admitted this was so. The tails of his grey morning coat flapping suddenly behind him, he bounded from the sofa.

"A-ha!" he shouted. "I am the one to cure that. A special remedy. Ordinary ones are futile. I go at once to the chemist on the corner to give my instructions. Relax. I shall return."

In ten minutes he was back and, sitting beside me, took from his tail pocket a small clear-glass bottle from which he poured a few drops of liquid on to a huge silk handkerchief.

"Breathe deeply. Inhale the remedy of Poliakov."

He had his arm round my shoulder and held the handkerchief to my nose with the air of a Field-Marshal succouring a stricken private.

The result was immediately beneficial. But I noticed too that the smell and

general effect were exactly those produced by a very widely advertised brand of remedy. I was sufficiently curious to inquire later from the chemist whether a certain gentleman—Poliakov was easy to describe—had just bought a bottle of this product and had it specially decanted into a plain bottle. Such had, the chemist said, been the case.

I found this little manoeuvre, this taking of so much trouble to please, both impressive and endearing, and years later, when I had left *The Times* and founded *The Week*, was delighted to renew acquaintance with Mr. Poliakov

at some diplomatic reception in London or Paris. So far as I remember he had himself by then left *The Times* but was still writing, in the *New York Times*, his internationally famous—and violently controversial—column under the name of "Augur."

He had a house in some square in South Kensington, and there I used to drink lemon tea or vodka with him, or walk round and round the gardens while he exercised his two small Afghan hounds and talked to me derisively in his harsh accents of the international situation, especially British policy.

Even when he later brought a libel



"Are the ruins safe for children?"



action against me our walks and talks continued amicably.

Being a supporter of what was sometimes called "the Vansittart line"—the notion that by a friendly policy to Mussolini the Axis could be split and Hitler isolated—he was fervent in his denunciations of those powerful personalities in England who, on the contrary, saw in Hitler a bulwark and potential crusader against Bolshevism and thought friendship with the Nazis both possible and desirable.

His sources of information from the anti-Nazi factions in both the British and French Foreign Offices were thus, at the time, first-rate—and the stories that came from them had that particular zip and zing which you get from official sources only when a savage intra-mural departmental faction fight is in progress.

I rushed about between London, Paris and Brussels, supplementing and checking these stories from other sources, and using Poliakov's pieces of news as swap-counters to get more. Vigorous anti-Nazis in the City, too, and on the so-called Churchillian Wing of the Conservative Party, were also very ready with "inside information."

At length I thought I had enough, and more than enough, to write in *The Week* a lengthy and thoughtful piece about the shape and aims of those in high places in England—they included, of course, the late Neville Chamberlain—who were working, disastrously as it seemed to me, for the "appeasement" of Adolf Hitler. (Incidentally, there were certainly scores of journalists and politicians

who knew just as much about it as I did.)

I published the story. Absolutely nothing happened. It made about as much of a bang as a crumplet falling on to a carpet. A few weeks later I published the whole thing again, in slightly different words. The result was similar.

And then about a month later I did it a third time. There were only trivial additions to the facts already published, though the language was a little sharper. But it happened that this time it occurred to me to head the whole story "The Cliveden Set," and to use this phrase two or three times in the text. And the thing went off like a rocket.

I think it was *Reynolds News*, three days later, which first picked up the phrase, but within a couple of weeks it had been printed in dozens of newspapers, and within six weeks had been used in almost every prominent newspaper of the western world. Up and down the British Isles, across and across

the United States, anti-Nazi orators shouted it from hundreds of platforms. At rallies of anti-fascists in Trafalgar Square and Madison Square Garden speeches sounded incomplete and lifeless without a denunciation of The Cliveden Set. Upon Lady Astor and her friends letters of furious abuse poured in, particularly from the United States, and Lady Astor, under the mistaken impression that poor Mr. John Strachey had something to do with *The Week*, nearly drove him from the Lobby of the House of Commons under the violence of her invective.

Long before the end of the year The Cliveden Set had ceased to represent, in anyone's mind, a particular group of individuals. It had become the symbol of a tendency, of a set of ideas, of a certain condition in, so to speak, the State of Denmark.

It had acquired a powerful and alarming significance for people who could hardly have named three of those who frequented Cliveden by the Thames, just as the Four Hundred Families in France meant something similar to thousands who could not have counted up to six of them.

The phrase went marching on because it first had dramatized and now summarized a whole vague body of suspicions and fears.

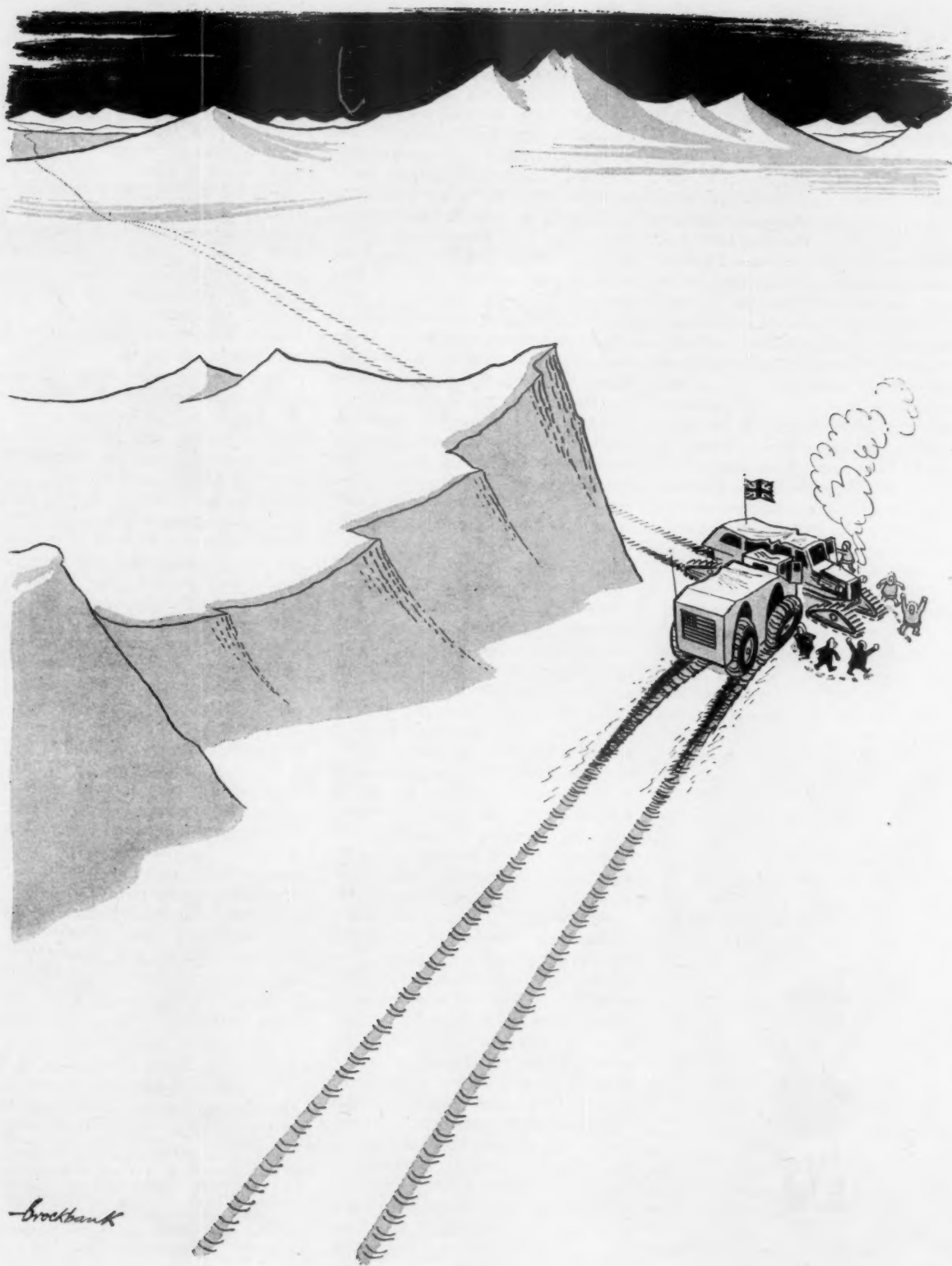
Friends of those under attack sometimes tried to persuade me to "modify" the story, to "tone it down." I refused on two simple grounds: First, that in my opinion the story was essentially true; second, that if I were suddenly to announce personally over the B.B.C. that the story had no foundation, no one would pay the slightest attention. People would just come to the conclusion that I had been nobbled by The Cliveden Set.

Relax, Boy

YOU may be convinced your mechanical notion is new;
But you're certainly late, and perhaps (by the ruthless) lamented—
However impressively novel the thing is to you,
It's sure to be one Leonardo da Vinci invented.

And as for your fragment of word-play, your crack, or your pun,
To take any credit for that is as big a mistake;
Though you may be perfectly certain it's never been done,
A little research would unearth it in *Finnegans Wake*.

R. M.



Brockbank

A Den of Stale Lions

By H. F. ELLIS

"THE fly half," the old Rugby football textbooks used to say, "is the pivot." Alert, lissom, debonair, he swung the attack this way or that as his fancy or the situation dictated. Then the wing forwards arose and harried him, until he began to look, at times, more like a flustered aunt than a debonair pivot. The neighbourhood of the scrum became unhealthily overcrowded for satisfactory pivoting. "The wing three-quarter is the pivot," declared W. W. Wakefield and Howard Marshall in a book published in the late 'twenties. The ball must be whisked out, with the minimum delay, to this beefier individual, who could then continue the direction of attack by going for the corner flag, reverse it by passing back to his centre, or put a cross-kick into the middle of the field. This was sound theory—but the tedious forwards interfered again. If the wing three-quarter rounded his opposite number he was more than likely to find a corner-flagging wing forward, as well as the full back, to beat; if he passed inside, his centre would be cut to the ground by one of the second-row, or "lock," forwards, also corner-flagging; if he kicked across, there in the middle waiting for the ball would be the opposing front-row forwards, who had run back deep for that very purpose.

Things began to look black for pivoting. Perhaps it would be better to leave it to the forwards, who seemed to be doing most of the defence anyway, to do the attacking as well. The backs, notably the fly half, could help by kicking into touch; or a short kick ahead might produce an advantageous loose scrum; or a kick to the corner

flag, followed by a lucky bounce, might score. Bennie Osler and the South African team of 1931-32 will be gloomily remembered: also, and much more recently, the co-operation of Kyle and the Irish pack. Only when supremely fast and penetrative backs were available, as in the recent tour of South Africa, did orthodox passing and pivoting seem to lead to anything more exciting than another throw-in from touch.

The above highly over-simplified and largely inaccurate summary of Rugby football tactics since the First World War may serve as an introduction to the fact that in this year's University Match the Oxford side advanced the startlingly new theory that *the man who had the ball was the pivot*. Attacks had no discoverable direction. A passed to B, who ran right-handed across the field and, at some stage in his journey, transferred the ball clandestinely behind his back to C, going left-handed, who disposed of it to D by the same means. D then ran sideways or backwards or even forwards, looking for someone else who would like a refreshing turn with the ball. Or perhaps C merely pretended to give it to D, preferring instead to turn in his tracks and run in the opposite direction, until an opportunity occurred to hurl a long overarm pass to E, who would be cunningly waiting on the spot C had recently vacated. In all this toing-and-froing no question arose of "drawing a man" or waiting until challenged before passing. Scissors and dummy-scissors were freely sold or exchanged with no opponent within twenty yards. The purpose was simply to disorganize the defence and conceal the ultimate direction of attack. How the Oxford men themselves decided when the moment had arrived to stop fooling about and really go for the line, is one of those mysteries. Perhaps the crowd, by bursting out laughing (as they occasionally did) at the sight of the bemused Cambridge defenders running hither and thither like distracted hens, unwittingly gave the signal and solved the problem. Solved, one way or another, it certainly was.

If club and international sides could spare the time that Oxford must have taken to perfect themselves in this

entertaining kind of football, the existing drill for forwards in defence would be disrupted. There is no point in corner-flagging when there is no indication whatever that the attack is developing towards any particular corner. Some sort of wide screen, preferably in Technicolor, seems to be called for—or a form of hedgehog defence in depth. But there is small chance of extravagant gaieties of this kind creeping into the match at Twickenham this Saturday. Unless, of course, Brace and Cliff Morgan have been spending a lot of time together during the past ten days.

This looks like being a battle of stale Lions. On the one side is the formidable Welsh pack, dripping with honours won in South Africa, with Morgan behind them—an unbeatable combination, if only they hadn't played so much football in the past year that they can hardly bear to drag themselves on to the field. On the other (unless one of them drops out—or down, or dead—before these words are in print) are England's potentially brilliant centres—capable of plying Woodward and Jackson with a stream of scoring passes, but for the fact that they (Davies and Butterfield) can no longer look at a football without succumbing to waves of physical nausea. Perhaps they will all come to some arrangement among themselves and walk off at half-time. Perhaps the staleness of forwards is more easily shaken off than the staleness of backs; or vice versa. The actual potentialities of players who, from all accounts, would much rather be curled up at home with a good book or other pastime are difficult to estimate. All that can safely be said at the moment is that the English side, with only three of these tattered and mangy Lions to carry, may felicitate themselves on the fact that Wales has seven. Or they may not.

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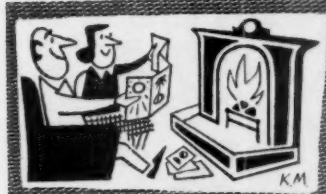
Gift

"The second seasonal example of largesse followed a story by a colleague about the bleak Christmas expectations of the old men in a common lodging house in Millgate, Wigan. Two days later a woman walked into the Wigan Borough Police Station thumped a large parcel on the information room desk and told them the contents were the old men mentioned in the *Evening Chronicle*."—*Manchester Evening Chronicle*



ROY DAVIS

Holiday Planning Section



WANT something different? Why not a Russian jaunt this year? Farther than Madrid, larger than Majorca, not so cold as Marie Byrd Land, nearer than Montevideo, the U.S.S.R. offers plenty of scope for a really chic, up-to-the-minute holiday.

When you think of it, Russia is in the news quite a lot these days: hardly a week goes by without some reference to it in the newspapers, however brief. Yes, Russia is certainly here to stay, and the time is not far distant when you will be pointed out as something of a freak in your favourite Espresso bar if you have not had *solyanka* soup in Leningrad or sailed along the Don to Rostov. You can get there by air in next to no time, and a little bird tells me that you will soon be able to buy your fur hat at London Airport *before you board the plane*.

Once in Moscow you will be struck by the many points of similarity between their way of life and ours—always a good start to a holiday. Muscovites, like Londoners, use their elbows on the Underground, scowl at strangers, love children, give gay parties but never ask you to them, distrust bureaucracy, leave fish-bones on the side of the plate, and take a lively interest in politics. (Russian politics, by the way, are different from ours. The most popular system of government is called Communism, and everybody is divided up into soviets. The arrangement is not easy to follow, but it certainly seems to be catching on. Almost everywhere you go you will bump into at least one Communist, and it is ten to one that the best-dressed, most nicely-spoken man in any gathering will turn out not to be a Conservative after all. This can be confusing at first. In fact, as in Ireland, it is best not to delve too deeply into politics: Russians seem to learn about it at school, and the things they know about English history can be most embarrassing—especially on holiday.)

An interesting city, Moscow, with its wide streets, skyscrapers, plain-clothes secret police, and nail-varnish openly on sale in the shops. Tourists are made very welcome. Cars, guides and interpreters are placed at their disposal, and at any of the Intourist hotels (there are three) you will feel immediately at home, especially if you are over seventy. Potted plants, antimacassars and red plush sofas abound. There is a night-club (if it hasn't already been raided), and its old-world charm has considerable appeal. The floor-show includes a fat woman doing the shimmy in a woollen vest, while for admirers of Ted Lewis and early Victor Sylvester the band is a must. Apart from this, night-life in Moscow is refreshingly sombre. The nearest thing to the Folies Bergère is the Bolshoi Theatre, and that's always full. At eleven p.m. you might think you were in Cowdenbeath.

Another diverting feature of Moscow life is the absence of

Come to Sunny Russia

bars. Unless you are staying at the Moskva or Sovietskaya Hotels, you may drink only with meals. (Incidentally you can get a very simple meal for two for ten pounds, with any luck.) I don't know how you can overcome the drinks question, but I shouldn't lose too much sleep over it if I were you, because a glass of beer works out at about twelve shillings.

There are always exciting queues to join in Moscow—for cinema seats, bread, bathroom fittings, tinned fruit, lectures: the list is endless. Another way to pass the time if you feel lonely is to stand stock still in the middle of Gorky Street (just off Red Square—you can't miss it), take your camera from its case and call out "Me English! . . . Me friend!" You will at once be surrounded by a milling throng of Muscovites—artisans, civil servants, minor poets, students, admirers of Paul Scofield, doctors, deviationists, farmers, soldiers, etc.—who will punch and jostle one another in a struggle to be the first to prod you with a forefinger and say "Churchill!" "Good Show!" or "Prince Charles!" (Most people in Moscow learn a smattering of English, probably at night school; but like most foreigners they tend to have rather laughable accents. However, if you are any good at making signs you will usually manage to get some sort of sense out of them.) Among the remarks made to English visitors



surrounded in the streets of Moscow the following are the most frequent:

"When did you last attend a lynching, please?"

"We are your friends."

"How much was that watch?"

"Why did you not open a second front sooner?"

"Come and see us again."

"You live in a hut in Knightsbridge, without drains."

"Where did you get that hat?"

"I require a photograph of Stanley Matthews."

"Why do you prepare for war while your peasants have to eat berries?"

"I like you."

"An old man has just run off with your walking-stick."

"Russia wants peace."

As you will realize, many fascinating conversations may be built on these simple openings. Do not be shy. Gain their confidence. Give them sweets. In this way you will get to know the *real* Russia; and if you can persuade a particularly frumpish teen-ager to pose for a photo, with the pink

walls of the Kremlin in the background, you'll be sure of a few guineas from one of the Sunday papers when you get home.

Many people tend to think that the U.S.S.R. consists merely of Moscow and Leningrad, but this is a misconception. Russia's unique attraction as a camper's paradise is the fact that it measures eight million five hundred thousand square miles, with a population of only two hundred million—many of whom are quite amusing people, such as Uzbeks, Turkmenians, Kazakhs, Khazars, Yakuts and Tatars. The Tadzhiks speak Persian, for some reason or other, while the Mordvinians and Udmurts, in north-west Siberia, speak Finnish. Most religions are catered for, including Roman Catholic, Buddhist, Animist, Moslem, Protestant, Jewish, Lamaist and Greek Orthodox. For times of services it is advisable to consult a local paper.

In the towns the women are roughly square in shape, and don't stand any nonsense. They wear their hair in plaits, which they wind around their heads to make them look picturesque. Alternately they smooth it all down with bear grease and drag it back behind their ears. Fashion models



"Ah well, bang goes the Concours d'Elégance."

have forty-two-inch hips and curious legs. Some arrangements have been made about promiscuity, but no tourist has yet fathomed what they are. Schoolboys learn to play chess blindfold. Russian jokes are about collective farmers scoring off civil servants, officials wangling jobs for their nephews, factory managers stealing sacks of sugar, and blocks of flats collapsing on account of bureaucracy in the foundations. Apples cost five shillings each. It is advisable to wear a muffler. Architecture was recently abolished. The Russians are a warm, friendly people, and have been building up a warm, friendly empire by gunpowder, infiltration, blarney and bloody murder with hardly a pause ever since the invasion of Siberia in 1581. A small slab of chocolate costs thirty shillings. If you enter a works canteen at lunch-time and see men and women, wearing brown serge clothes and clogs, shuffling about in pairs like troglodytes in a haunted sewer, it is workers' playtime and they are dancing the two-step.

Yes, many and varied are the sights that await you in this land of rolling plain, freezing steppe, piercing wind and crowded bus. And don't forget to take a good fat notebook: you'll have to pay for the trip somehow.

Since you obviously don't speak Russian, I am taking the liberty of appending a few simple phrases which seem to cover most eventualities:

ENGLISH

Diamonds are trumps.
I want a furnished room
with the use of the
kitchen.
Is Mrs. Brown at home?
Two stalls, please, if possible
in the middle.
Leningrad won 3—1.
I've got cramp in my
right calf.
Is the ice strong enough?
I keep sneezing and my
nose runs.
I'm afraid we shall have
to spend the night in a
mountain hut.
I wish I were at home.
Do you wear combinations?
How long did you serve in
the W.R.N.S.?
Have you any low-necked
evening dresses?

RUSSIAN

Бубны козыри
Мне нужна меблированная
комната с правом пользо-
ваться кухней
Что г-жа Браун дома?
Два кресла, пожалуйста,
если возможно в середине
Ленинградцы выиграли
три один
У меня судорога в правой
икре
Что лед держит?
Я все чихаю и нос у меня
течет
Боюсь, нам придется пере-
ночевать в горной избе
Я хотел бы быть дома
Вы носите комбинации?
Сколько времени Вы слу-
жили в женском морском
корпусе?
Имеются-ли у Вас деколь-
тированные вечерние
платья?

ALEX ATKINSON



Nor Waves the Cypress

THE marble of the Taj Mahal is cracked;
The thing is slowly going, wall by wall,
Tempting the unconverted to extract
A parable from its approaching fall.

Imperial Muslims, building by the book,
Left it a pattern of their sterile arts:
Imperial Englishmen, succeeding, took
The whole refined concoction to their hearts.

Something about it seemed to fill the bill;
Its marble spikes symmetrically placed,
Its intricate irrelevance of skill
Caught and inflamed their mid-Victorian taste.

They loved its lavish unconstructiveness
Embellished with romantic overtones,
Such beauty as a shoe-box might possess
Elaborately set with precious stones.

They spread its fame, they made it theirs by right,
The showpiece of their private fairyland.
By many honeymoons' uneasy light
They dutifully viewed it hand in hand.

They made a fetish of the thing. They made
A million models, which they sent away
For other Englishmen, in course of trade,
To re-import as presents from Bombay;

Till time, which levels all things, duly sent
A generation of less generous soul
Which viewed with equal disillusionment
The gorgeous East and our imperial rôle

And sees some sort of rightness in the news
That one more load is shifting, and the Taj,
Regal among republican Hindus,
Will not for long survive the British raj.

P. M. HUBBARD

The Guide Punchelin

WELCOME TO BRITAIN

Visitors from abroad will find a warm welcome in Britain, with eager hands outstretched on all sides. Show your friendly response by putting money in these. Remember that you can't get a drink in the afternoons, that every town has its free car park if you have enough petrol to get you there, and that after certain hours a *delicatessen* cannot sell sandwiches, only separate bread and meat to make your own. Also note the following:

British Roads

These are of three kinds, main, by and up. The compilers of the Atlas (pp. 860-895) cannot be responsible for changes made after going to press, by which time all roads may be up. Small black figures in a circle denote average traffic-jam times in minutes. Coach roads are marked (c), denoting their continuous use by forty-seater coaches travelling to and from the sea in convoys of twenty at 55 m.p.h.

Places of Interest

For the first time the Guide includes mention of galas, etc., opened by well-known television personalities. Tourists confining their sight-seeing to Britain's many fine "new towns" should get a route from another source. Clearly the Guide cannot include details of communities springing up overnight.

Hotels

Though the Guide attempts to convey in advance the quality of the British Hotel this remains at the last a matter of individual taste. Where specialities of cuisine are mentioned the reader must decide for himself whether an enticement or a warning is intended. Any comments on hotels should be sent to the British Travel and Holidays Association, remembering that it is illegal in Britain to send obscene matter through the mails.

SYMBOLS USED IN THE GUIDE PUNCHELIN

General		Municipal statue		Dry beds		Usually closed	
Bomb damage		Polite shopkeeper		Viewing room		Unmanned	
Litter black spot		Hotels		Tooth glasses		Petrol (no repairs)	
U.S.A.A.F. personnel		De luxe		Warm toast		Repairs (no petrol)	
Fish shop		Typical		Cuisine		Unreliable directions	
Drainage scheme		Homely		Eatable		Petrol and antiques	
Slot machine arcade		Dancing below room		Homely		Accommodation only	
Stately home		Good view		Deadly		Breakdown service	
Teddy boys		Nice view		Tea-bags		Quick repairs	
Speed Trap		View		Warm beer		Slow repairs	
Dimbleby slept here		Sidings nearby		"OK" Claret (1955)		Spare parts for old cars	
N.H.S. doctor		Town clock strikes		"Little Wonder" cigars		Spare parts for trailers	
N.H.S. surgeon		Town clock strikes and chimes		Eau de potage		Spare parts for agricultural machinery	
N.H.S. psychiatrist		Water-pipe noise		Porridge aux lumps		Spare parts for umbrellas	
T.V. dealer		Claims oldest waiter		Separate pastry		Boy only	
Church used by Royalty		Resident bore		Dainty teas		Unclassified	
Factory		Golf centre		Garages		Rocket-range	
Literary Circle meets		Oak beams		Smithy type		Wishing-well	
		Boots cleaned		Punctures only			



GT. FROWSTON-BY-BINGLINGSLEY

Typical old English village with village hall (c. 1898). To the east, interesting old lumps in Marley's Meadow, thought to be tombs of Saxon Kings or possibly disused air-raid shelters. Home of Mr. F. Bether at 23 High Street, successful "What's My Line?" challenger; plaque affixed. Sir Thomas More's daughter once had a drink at "The Lamb." Interesting old thatched houses, "The Gatchens" (if still standing). Modern concrete lamp-standards. Twenty-two public houses, two hotels with interesting old waitresses.

Hotels

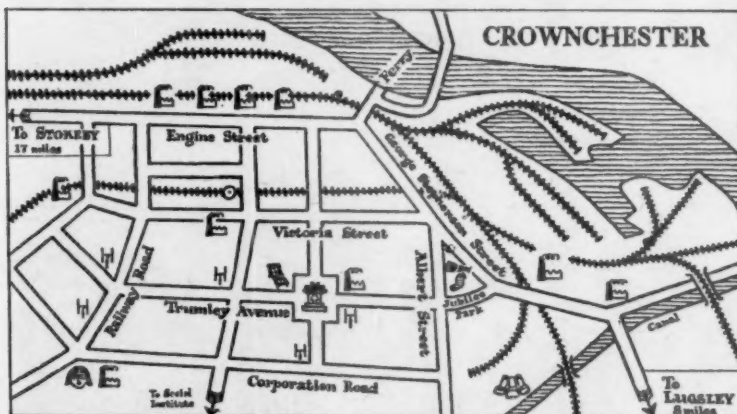
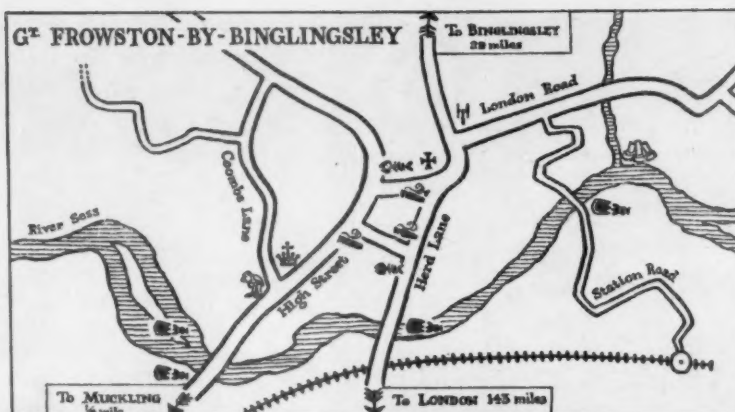
King's Head.



Plasterers' Arms.

Garages

There are no garages, but horses may be hired by the hour: Capt. Sapper, "Cob House." Tel.: 2.



CROWNCHES

Typical industrial town. Sleeps during Wakes Week. Many cultural centres include the Sir Herbert Chelp Museum, the Percy Trumley Art Gallery and the W. H. Vokins Botanical Gardens. Statue in Trumley Avenue is unique in showing a late Alderman in robes on horseback, with drawn sword (Sir H. Chelp). Other entertainments: ice- and roller-rinks, "freshwater" fishing (Crownchester Canal), dancing (Ritz Ballroom, Engine Street). Also see Keir Hardie House for permanent exhibition of Strike Notices.

Hotels

Chelp Arms.



The Lud.

Betty's.

Station.

Garages

Victory Motors.

While-U-Wait Autos.

Lightning Repairs Ltd.

SKEGPOOL-ON-SEA

Typical watering-place. 28 cinemas, eight variety theatres, 12 dance-halls, two piers, one repertory theatre (at time of going to press), four ice-rinks, three greyhound stadiums, eight bathing-pools. For music-lovers, the Beethoven Trio, 4 p.m.-4.30 p.m. in West Pier Concertorium, alternate days. At nearby Eastcliffe, the Floral Gardens and Castle Ruins (artificial, c. 1928). "Have a Go" twice broadcast from Skegpool Plastics Centre, Fish Street. Municipal records give more than 200 hotels, of which the following are representative.

Grand Savoy-Metropole-Carlton.

Central Conference.

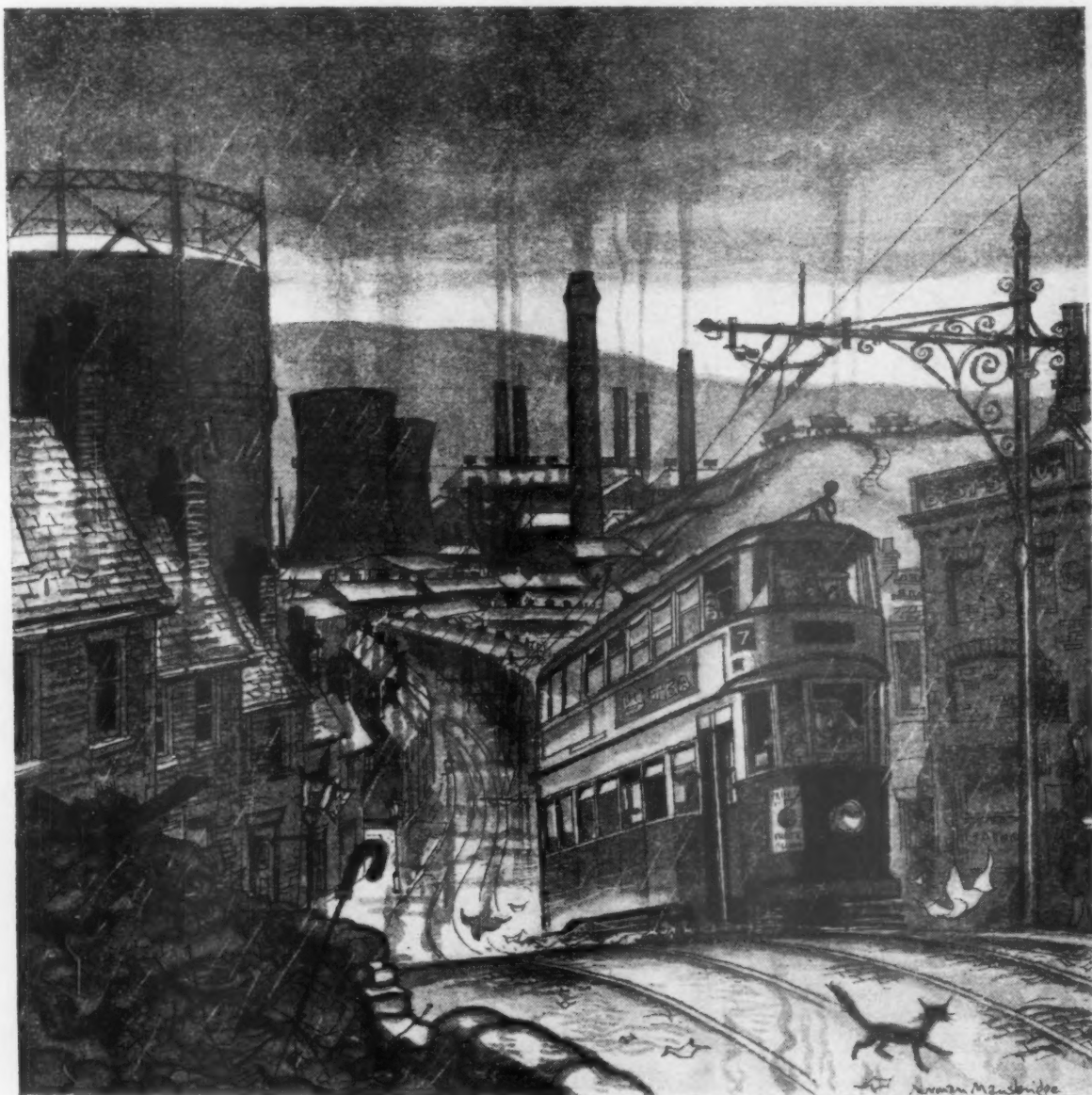
Clarence House.

The Grosvenor.

Garages

Most of these are as Skegpool's visitors tend to buy afresh rather than have old cars repaired. Note may however be taken of All-Nite Garage, Conquest Motors





Have you ever ridden in a tram?

THERE are still places in the quiet backwaters of Britain where communication between one district and another is made by the old-fashioned electric tram.

People who do not know them cannot imagine the curious old-world grace with which these dignified vehicles glide along the gleaming tracks that line the cobbled streets in many an

outlying metropolis in Britain's ever-surprising isle.

They seem at once exotic and homely as they growl and clang their way past the long terraces of humble homesteads, from pub to railway station, from cricket field to chapel. *Ting!*—and Mrs. Ormondroyd has the fourpenny ticket that will take her to the gasworks. *Ting!*—and Mr. Huyton is on his

way to the post office to collect his pension.

They're friendly vehicles, trams, as friendly as the folk who man them and the folk who ride them. It is worth making a detour to get to know them.

Drop in and see your travel agent now. He will be glad to give you any further advice you require.

For further information and free literature, write the British Travel Association.

Seven Star Heaven

By R. G. G. PRICE

WHEN he woke he could not remember immediately where he was. The room was furnished in restrained taste and very comfortable. He thought he must be at home, not out with his family at Park Drive, of course, but at the Majestic in his home town, only a short distance from the office. He felt too lazy to get up and look, but he knew that if he opened the window and leant out he could see the highest trees in the Gardens. At the back of the building would be the low-ceilinged quarter he had loved ever since he began work there and the foreign food down steps and the music shops.

Then he thought that perhaps he was wrong, that he was off on a business trip, that he had had a hard day the day before in conference. He wondered whether he could be in Rome. He had only to get up and lean out and there would be a garden up a wall and the edge of a gate that had been built for the Caesars to parade under. He wondered how far he was from the Via Nazionale, where the Rome office was. He suddenly felt like an *aranciata spremuda*.

He stretched out his hand with an effort and picked a printed card off the wall. It was headed non-committally *Hotel* and printed in six languages. It simply said the building contained a barber, a florist, a post-office and a cinema. He still felt too dazed with his exceptionally heavy sleep to recover the immediate past. Could he be in New York? Would someone from the New York office turn up with theatre tickets?

Could he get down to the Village and see Charles and Magda? Could he manage the complete American breakfast? His imagination drifted across the world-wide interests of his corporation. What about Tokyo? What about Birmingham?

He rang for Room Service and gave his orders to a neutral-voiced, courteous, ungushing woman. He could not place her accent. The light brown skin and odd mixture of racial traits of the waiter who brought in his breakfast suggested miscegenation. His voice was foreign but perfectly at ease.

"Where am I?" he asked as he poured out the coffee.

"In the Hotel Majestic, sir," said the waiter without any comment in his tone.

"In the Hotel Majestic where?" he asked irritably.

"Fifth floor, sir."

He snapped angrily and the waiter bowed, as though he had been instructed how to deal with a situation that had been foreseen, and said he would get the Floor Manager.

The breakfast was good, but although everything he had ordered was produced rapidly and expertly, it threw no light on his whereabouts. Neither did the appearance of the Floor Manager, who might have come from almost any part of the Mediterranean, as he waited for the guest's questions with a smile of restrained friendliness.

"I can't seem to remember anything. How did I get here?"

"You came from the airport in the hotel bus, sir."

"I can't remember that, though I suppose I looked at the town through the windows."

"The bus is specially designed for the comfort of our guests, sir. They would not enjoy seeing bad weather or being fried in the sun, would they? Provided the light is clear and the air is conditioned there is no need of windows. The walls of the hotel buses are all carefully blended pastel shades."

"What airport are you talking about?"

"The hotel's private airport. It is reserved for the planes that link the hotels."

"I suppose they have no windows either?"

"Flying so far above the cloud they are better without windows, which often permit of alarm in taking off and landing."

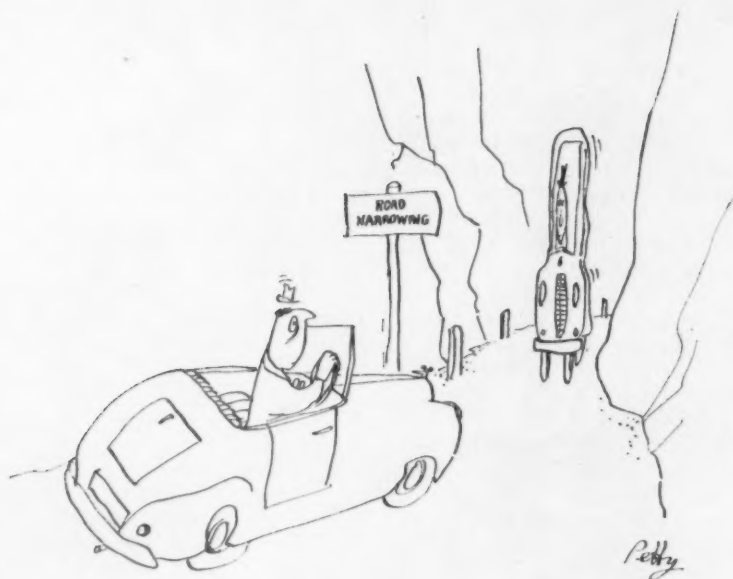
"You mean I came here from some other hotel?"

"All our guests do, sir. Sometimes they remain with us for a long time, but most of them are rather restless and move on to another hotel. If you wish us to reserve a passage for you, please let the office know. We shall be happy to arrange it."

"I shall be wondering whether I have ever lived in the raw world at all soon. Perhaps I've been renamed Guest 55/a/13 or something."

Nervously he jumped from the bed and got his passport. "*The Manager of the Hotel requests and requires all Hotel Managers, Plane Captains and Bus Drivers to serve the Bearer, to comply with his requests, to study his comfort and*"





to maintain him in an optimum physical environment."

He rushed to the window and tried to open it, only to find it was a lighting panel designed to represent a cloudless blue sky. The Manager explained that air-conditioning was more agreeable because more precisely regulable than windows of the older type. He began to dress and the Manager smiled politely and left, saying that he would find the lifts to the lower floors just outside his room.

"All I want is the lift to the front door," he shouted. The Manager explained that buses could be boarded in a small bus-station that formed part of the actual building and was, in fact, a roofed courtyard.

He turned into the lift and snapped "Street level." Then, as the lift-girl looked doubtful, "Ground Floor." He arrived in an open hall, with shops and sales counters all round the walls, and plenty of chairs and divans. Archways

labelled in strip lighting led to various Restaurants, the Medical Officer, the Swimming Pool, the Sports Room, the Library, the Television Lounge, the Crèche and the Bars. He swung right the way round but there were no revolving doors, no cluster of hall porters. He took out a cigarette and an hotel servant immediately gave him a light. He sat down in a chair and as he lowered himself another servant eased it forward for him, placed magazines by his side and adjusted the portable ash-tray so that he required the minimum movement to flick his ash into it.

He noticed an office and jumped up and went over to the guichet marked "Inquiries." A tailored smile called him by name and asked whether he would like a reservation to be made of a seat in the cinema, of a table in one of the restaurants.

He said "I have lost my memory. I want to know what town in what country I'm in."

The receptionist said "You are in the hotel."

He grew angrier and said "Tell me at once—where is the hotel?"

She said "Why, right here, of course, sir. You are in the middle of it."

He pounded on the ledge in front of him and said "What town and what country is the hotel in?"

She said "But, sir, this is a de luxe hotel, it's what they call extraterritorial. It is linked up with the other hotels, you know. There is nothing to worry about. Local taxes and so on are included in your bill and we have an arrangement covering Customs."

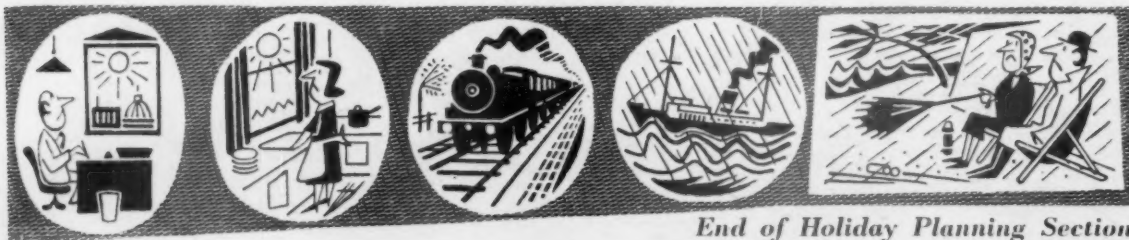
He turned and ran to a blank piece of wall below a high niche holding a bronze god and a small inset fountain and hammered on it. The solid marble was not a hidden door, nor was it solid marble. It was slightly warm to the touch and it gave under his blows, though each time he drew back his fist it regained its smooth surface. Then he butted it with his head and felt dazed and tried to open his eyes and opened them and was back in bed in his hotel room and a waiter was standing by him to take his breakfast order and he remembered he had come in the night before for a business conference at eleven.

The waiter said "What would you like for breakfast, sir? We can provide anything you would care for; might I suggest fruit-juice, cereal, eggs, rolls and butter, coffee?"

He said he wanted a typical local breakfast and the waiter said most guests in the hotel liked the breakfast he had suggested, so he supposed it would be that.

"The scene is the Dockers' elegant first-floor flat in Claridge House, Davies Street, Mayfair. Lady Docker is wearing a plum-covered housecoat."—Illustrated

More tin-opener trouble.



End of Holiday Planning Section

Misleading Cases: The Stamp Ramp

By A. P. H.

Regina v. Hill

MR. JUSTICE ERMINE gave his considered judgment in the Stamp Monopoly case to-day. He said:

In this important prosecution Doctor Hill, a Member of Parliament and Her Majesty's Postmaster-General, is accused of certain offences under the Restrictive Practices (Restriction) Act, 1956. Among his numerous activities are included the manufacture and sale of postage stamps. These are sold not only by the regular State post offices but by certain individuals who, though not employed by the Crown, are permitted to engage in this traffic after strict inquiry and under licence. One such licensee was a Mr. Biffin, who kept a small shop in a quiet corner of a London suburb, for the sale of newspapers, magazines, tobacco, sweets, stationery and so forth. The nearest post office, or sub-post-office, was half a mile away, and it was a great convenience to Mr. Biffin's customers, many of whom were old and impecunious, to be able to purchase stamps at his little shop. But to Mr. Biffin this trade brought no direct revenue. It was, he told the Court, "just part of the service," and a tedious part too, he added. Without doubt it carried some benefit to the Crown as well by attracting his customers into a certain amount of unnecessary correspondence.

After many years a Mr. Pook set up a shop of a similar character about half-way between Mr. Biffin and the sub-post-office, which, by the way, was run in harness with another small stationery and miscellaneous shop. Mr. Pook, who very soon drew off some of Mr. Biffin's trade, applied for a licence to sell stamps, wishing not to be behind Mr. Biffin in anything. But the General Post Office, after examining all the circumstances, said that since their own office was only four hundred yards away the district was sufficiently supplied already, and refused to grant Mr. Pook a licence.

Mr. Biffin then had a notion which shows that the fine and famous spirit of the British merchant is not quite dead. He put it about that not only was he the only purveyor of postage stamps for half a

mile in any direction, but he was willing to sell stamps at cut prices—a five shilling book for 4/6d. and a half-crown book for 2/3d. This generous dealing soon brought back to him most of the customers who had deserted to Mr. Pook. But after a few weeks the news reached the General Post Office, carried, it may be, by Mr. Pook himself. Mr. Biffin suffered a severe rebuke from one of the prisoner's officers, his licence to sell stamps was withdrawn, and a drift of customers to Mr. Pook began again.

These are the facts upon which, at the indignant Mr. Biffin's instigation, the Postmaster-General is charged with offences under Sections 2, 5 and 8 (sub-section 2(b)) of the Act. The Act is directed against monopolies and

monopolistic practices which unnaturally narrow the channels of trade and tend to aggravate the cost of living. The conduct of the prisoner, member of an Administration which has set its face against such practices, must be considered surprising, even if it were lawful. He holds a monopoly of the manufacture and sale of postage stamps, and the carriage of the mails. There are many who think that private enterprise would do this business better and cheaper, as it has in the past. Some of us can remember the golden days of the penny post, for which the celebrated Rowland Hill won so fine a battle in 1840. That was the envy of the world.

Many a private captain of industry, I believe, could provide a similar service



to-day if he had the powers, without the processes, of Whitehall. So long ago as the year 1680 one William Dockwra, a London merchant, brought into existence the London penny post, a service which in some ways has never been equalled—four to eight deliveries a day in the greater part of London, and ten to twelve in the business centres. But as soon as it began to show a profit the Duke of York, on whom the Post Office revenues had been settled by the Crown, asserted his monopoly. Dockwra was compelled to withdraw, and, what is more, to pay damages.

The melancholy tale has continued ever since, though in spite of Government handling the London penny post did survive till 1801, and the general penny post from 1840 to 1918. To-day it costs 2½d. to send a letter from a house

in Berkeley Street to a house in Berkeley Square: and if any private citizen offered to carry it for a penny all the forces of the State would be massed against him.

Mr. Biffin did not go as far as that: but upon him, none the less, this jealous monopoly has jumped with crushing effect. What was his offence? He has not defrauded the Revenue, for he paid full value for the stamps that he obtained from the Post Office: he has not even made a profit out of them. He has not restricted the public use of stamps: indeed, to some extent, he may have expanded it. He has not increased, or maintained at too high a level, any part of the cost of living: indeed, within his own small circle, he has reduced it. Yet he has been held to be at fault, and harshly punished. Why? Because he sold certain goods at a price below that

prescribed and exacted by the producer. In other words, in all its ugliness, we see that familiar ogre Retail Price Maintenance, supported by secret inquiries and punitive sanctions, which is the principal target of Part I of the Act. I find the prisoner guilty of all the particular offences with which he is charged. It would be idle to inflict upon him the heavy fines provided in Section 128, for the money would have to be found by the taxpayer and paid into the Treasury, which would be contrary to natural justice. So he must go to prison for a bit.

On the general question to which I have referred with admirable brevity and point it is not for the Court to pronounce a decisive opinion. But it is provided in Part III of the Act that the Court may refer to the Monopolies Commission, commonly known, I believe, as the "Star Chamber," any matter which in such proceedings as these may suggest to the Court the possibility of inefficiency or public damage in the conduct of any monopoly: and the Commission may then recommend measures for the ending or mending of the monopoly in question. Without hesitation I formally refer the affairs of the General Post Office for close examination by that Commission. The charges made for the carriage of letters and parcels, and for what are revoltingly described as Telecommunications, are vital to the commercial life of the nation, and enter into the cost of almost every commodity and service. If they are shown to be excessive, whether from avarice or inefficiency, Her Majesty's Ministers will see at least one clear course through the jungle of Inflation. It may well be that such a service should no longer be left at the mercy of a monopoly. The Commission may recommend the Crown to follow the example itself has set in the field of television, that is, to establish, in stimulating parallel, an Independent Postal and Telephone Service. On the other hand, it may not. Take him away.



"LIGHTNING STRIKE ON BUSES FAILS.
DISPUTE OVER CONDUCTOR."

Manchester Guardian

It sounds quite satisfactory.

Ohm Sweet Ohm

By WILLIAM SANSOM

THE new and terrible little books are in our pockets, blank pages accusative, kinds of skeletons of an unknown future. What will be written beneath the printed premonition *All Saints Day Fox Hunting Begins?* What can our simple pens presume to add to so vital a liquidation as *Removal Term (Scotland)?* *O Full Moon*, the diary apostrophizes at least once a month. (*Last Quarter* it weeps, like a broken goat. Yet one day these virgin, abstract pages must be spidered with our painful pathognomics: with "Euston 6.30": with "Remember pay Nappy Service": with "Lucky Star 2.30, *Romping Rhomboid* (Cesarwtch)": with "Dine Mossinghams, Ritz" (crossed out): and sometimes, so furtive, a ring round a date and a cross in a corner.

These, though, are idle terrors compared with the full impact of those few pages already filled in at the front of the little book: I do not mean those on which by now we have already written, I mean the printed pages, those we would like for extra telephone numbers. Let us not suppose—for it would be too strong a meat—that we have been the distracted recipients of a *Gardener's Companion*, or a *Motorist's Diary*, or a *Nurse's Compendium*; that one should live with fields of unendurable compost, torque and gasket on the A6, hints on gastrosjejunostomy or pretty pen-and-ink executions of Hey's Skull Saw is just bad luck, and we will hardly be expected to spend a year in such company.

No, let us take the simple case of the ordinary five or six pages of assimilable general knowledge at the front of an ordinary diary: the words we may read self-consciously alone in a restaurant; or on a paperless railway journey; or when there is so very much to do that it cannot be faced and idleness must be fabricated, as when one reads the telephone directory. This is the moment! This is the light-headed hour when we learn that the Moon's Mass is 1/81 of Earth's, that Solomon's Temple was built in 1012 B.C., that the area of Baffin Land is 230,000 square miles (and one square mile is 2.5889 sq. kilometres; work that in wool for your Dutch friends). It is also the hour when conscience learns what ageing brains have

long forgotten, old schooled simplicities, *bienfaisances* as the grains in a dram and the links in a chain and all those square, one-O'ed rods that go to make a single rood. Much water has passed beneath the bridge: but then—could it truly have been water, when two-pints-make-one-quart weathers so mysteriously well?

Self-condemnation rigours quickly into hope. The daydream begins. "If I knew all these things, if so few small pages rested on the tip of my tongue as easily as this diary rests on my fingertips—what sure advancements would be made, what unknown fields of lolly conquered!" The vision grows—of a cold-eyed self, computing like lightning *without even moving the thin pale lips*; and the answer raps out: and the great Belgian financier opposite is floored; congratulations, suave handshakes, and one is sleeping on the boards of sixty companies contemporaneously with the cushions of a Mediterranean yacht. But daydreams can be generous, success brings on a warmer appreciation of others—and soon one is lost again, now in a blaze of admiration for the compiler of the Important Dates in History page. One little page with not quite one hundred dates selected—yet this man not only includes such banalities as the Battle of Waterloo and the Gunpowder Plot and the first Pharaoh (it is *world* history, Confucius comes in too), but he manages 1769 Arkwright's Spinning Jenny, 1694 Bank of England Incorporated, and 1878 Electric Lighting introduced and the Phonograph invented! Note the careful distinction. And he goes further: he distinguishes between 1440 Koster invented printing, and 1476 Caxton *began* printing! All on one page.

Such magic shatters the brightest daydream, sags one sorrowfully to earth. And thus to earth one day I was sagged—only to turn the page and see staring brahly at me the following: OHM's LAW—Watts = Volts × Amps, Volts = Amps × Ohms.

This is in itself disquieting: but how much more when one realizes the human colloquy inferred! Soon I could see the terrible asseveration less in letter than in figure, as something like an early-nineteenth-century painting of a conversation piece—I saw, I see, the



German Herr Ohm, the youngest of them all, dictating in the new trousers what his knee-breeched elders Signor Volta of Como and M. Ampère the Lyonnais and our own James Watt should do. I see these three learned gentlemen performing a sort of physicists' square-dance to the guttural call of the youngster from Cologne, himself joining in only towards the end, as a Canaletto sky turns from blue to evening yellow and the white of the garden furniture and the dying silks darken. Who is the fiddler—Galvani? As the dance livens, the law livens too! Watts = Amps² × Ohms! Watts = Volts² ÷ Ohms! It is all there, plainly in my diary! And Ohm is taking a greater part at each conjugation, finally running in underneath, while old Watt takes the lead. Little does the young dog care how Ampère grieved, his father's execution or spent a lifetime loving Julie Carron; how Alessandro Volta capped his physicist's medals with a senatorship of the new Lombardy; how Watt only wanted to retire to the quiet attic at Heathfield Hall where he spent his last nineteen years. No, Herr Ohm must go on. The lights of Europe must go on. But alas, even Ohm could never be a law unto himself. He died of apoplexy, at Munich, in 1854.

Insult to Injury

"KNIFE IN YOUTH'S STOMACH
CHARGE OF UNLAWFUL POSSESSION."
Worcester County Press



THE cult of mink still keeps pace with mink cultivation. Yet as ever more mink farms start up in country after country, there must surely come a time when too many minks will be chasing too few film stars.

How is it that mink has become the contemporary symbol for luxury? The magnate with the Midas touch confers mink on his lady as though it were the greatest tribute he could pay to beauty. Yet he could settle for sables at twice the cost. Ermine, too, is attractively high and pricey; while the rare chin-chilla is beyond the dreams of normal avarice. Again, broadtail is fabulous both in price and legend. One of the fables, obstetrically inexact, is that the ewe is slaughtered for her unborn young. In general practice this is not so. Broadtail is only obtained as the result of an accident or the premature death of the ewe. It is, as might be supposed, a very delicate pelt; so thin and supple that it has been used by *couturiers* to make complete suits. Balmain's last

collection showed an evening dress entirely of white broadtail.

Yet it is mink, of the weasel tribe, which spells prosperity and success. Mink stands for glamour, for *premieres*, for spotlights. It has largely taken the place of Russian sable which stood for romance, for Romanoffs, carriages and candelabra. Sables have an aristocratic *goût de scandale* which has accompanied them through the years and through the novels . . . a fur for high-bred heroines to love in, not pin-up girls. Thus, whereas before the war Russian sable was nearly six times the price of mink, it is now only twice as much, the demand for mink having increased three hundredfold. Mink is a very good fur. It is versatile, being suitable for both day and evening wear; it is most becoming in all its colours; it is hard-wearing, and it has an excellent name for the headlines. Indeed, it could be a case of give a weasel a good name; small magic in "the weasel touch."

More endearing than its family name is the fact that the mink's young are called kits. Each basic mutation colour has started with a freak kit. It was the appearance on a Wisconsin mink ranch of a little odd-kit-out, grey instead of brown, which started the whole mutation business in the early nineteen-thirties. Oh, the despair of its poor mother when she saw her ugly minkling, the suspicions of the father! But the breeder saw its potentialities, and worked out a three-year pattern of inheritance. A standard brown female is crossed with a male mutation, producing an all-dark family. In the second year the females of this hybrid litter are crossed with mutation males: half the kits are mutation, the other half being hybrids just like Mum. In the third year, mutation is crossed with mutation to produce a complete mutation litter.

The most rare and expensive mutations are Topaz and Sapphire. Then come, in order of precedence,

Snow-white, Aleutian, Royal Pastel, and Silverblu. Mutations cost more than the brown ranch mink, but wild mink is the most costly of all. In the animal world it is the creatures who lead the toughest lives who have the finest coats—just the opposite to what obtains in the world of women. Thus, the mink of perfection comes from the far Canadian North. Nevertheless, despite his cosseted life, the ranch mink's pelt wears just as well as the wild one; and the lady who prefers wild mink for its silky golden-brown appearance can get the same effect, at ranch mink price, by choosing the mutation "Half-blood": ranch mink crossed with a mutation.

Persian lamb has always been more favoured on the Continent than in England; but this year it is much seen in London, particularly for accessories and etceteras: muffs, hats, collars, cuffs and facings. Persian lamb is, in truth, the most urbane of furs, mating most successfully with town tweeds. The South West African Persian lamb would seem, by its name, to be a creature of dual nationality, a displaced animal. When Germany was developing her pre-1914 colonies, a far-sighted Fatherlander smuggled four rams and twenty-eight ewes out of Afghanistan; smuggling must have been easier in those days. These chosen lambs flourished exceedingly in the country of their abduction, and Persian lamb is now, next to diamonds, the mandate's richest asset, nicknamed "black gold." On the hoof, the Persian lamb must look oddly chic and boulevardier in those regions, with her thin black-stockinged legs, her neatly permed hair. The young lambs have flatter pelts, only marcelle waved; it is the matron muttons who affect the tightest curlicues.

In the collection of Mr. S. London there are some fine examples of grey Persian lamb, undyed. Some feel that black Persian lamb ages the wearer;



"As I was saying to Woodrow Wyatt. . ."

not so the grey. Not so at all Mr. London's long double-breasted grey coat, a young woman's possession, tailored and debonair. In this salon, also, beaver is much loved. Phantom beaver is only a third the price of mink; and a honey-beige coat, with caftan slits *au Dior*, is wholly of this moment. For the country, ivory or caramel beaver are more sportive; and Mr. London has in hand a model of pure white beaver, the first in this country. Also unique is his £3,000 chinchilla coat: hardly a coat, just a little evening shrug, soft and silken, weighing nothing at all. It is only two years since the law against trapping chinchilla was lifted, and the forty-six skins which make up this simple garment are the first we have imported. It is this House which supplied the six zebra skins which upholstered Lady Docker's car. But there are no zebras in the salon; leopard and ocelot are the only obvious candidates for the old Zoo tie. Ocelot, always the fur for spectator sports, is now regarded as equally smart for town. It follows fashion more closely than the softer pelts, and styling

is highly important if the ocelot is to look contemporary and well-groomed.

The Bradley collection, *couturier* designed, is always the most immediate to the mode: a brown hair seal redingote has low-placed flap pockets and caftan slits; a grey hair seal jacket has white flank reverses; dyed Russian ermine is shown for country wear, tightly belted with a leather girth; lynx is mounted on black velvet for a doublet to wear with after-ski pants. For evening, the collection includes circular stoles with sleeves; stoles moored by little buttoning cummerbunds; natural white mink coats lined with brocade. In general, there is a preference for capes and cape collars, for much fullness from the shoulders. Necklines are neat, and often collarless, while the wrap or cape-stole stands away from the neck, softly framing the profile. Sleeves tend to be narrow and cuffless, therefore neat and convenient; many are only three-quarter length, or have a tight inner lining which allows them to be pushed up and stay up: the cocktail sleeve.

There is so much about furs that the eye does not see but the heart could

grieve over later, that it is wise to go to such specialist furriers where the best advice and after-care is given. A musquash coat, for example, can cost £300; one, seemingly similar, half that price. It is not only the quality of the pelts which makes the difference, but of the workmanship, the prodigious workmanship in each model: seventy to a hundred skins make one mink coat.

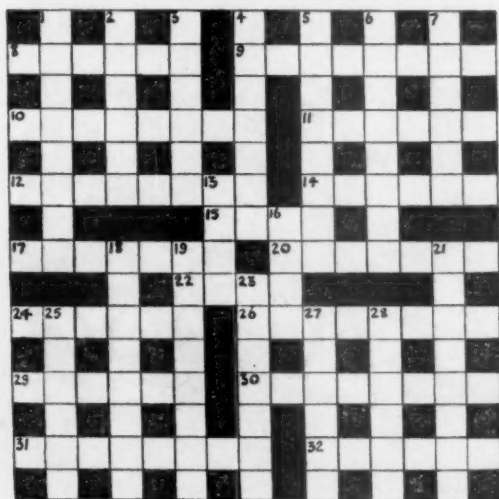
A hundred weasels to one mink coat . . . how many thousand go to the Charity Ball? Were the attendant in the cloakroom to fall asleep in the unbusy time around midnight, might not her charges come alive at the witching hour? Not only the minkish weasels, but the playful opossums and beavers, the sable martens and ermine stoats, the blue and white foxes—and how many polecats to one fitch coat? As the sounds of the last waltz drifted into the cloakroom there would be a scamper back to the hangers. Once more the anxious voice of the White Rabbit (call him White Mink) would be heard complaining: *The Duchess! The Duchess! Oh, my dear paws! Oh, my fur and whiskers!*

ALISON ADBURGHAM

Holiday Planning Crossword

ACROSS

8. This adder's not poisonous, it's periodical. (6)
9. 10 more formally; after 8 it's time to bask. (8)
10. Screw up your vulgar face in single-decked boats; that's one way of spending them. (8)
11. Amid the alien corn, as a critical cabaret visitor might say; after 10 passports needed. (6)

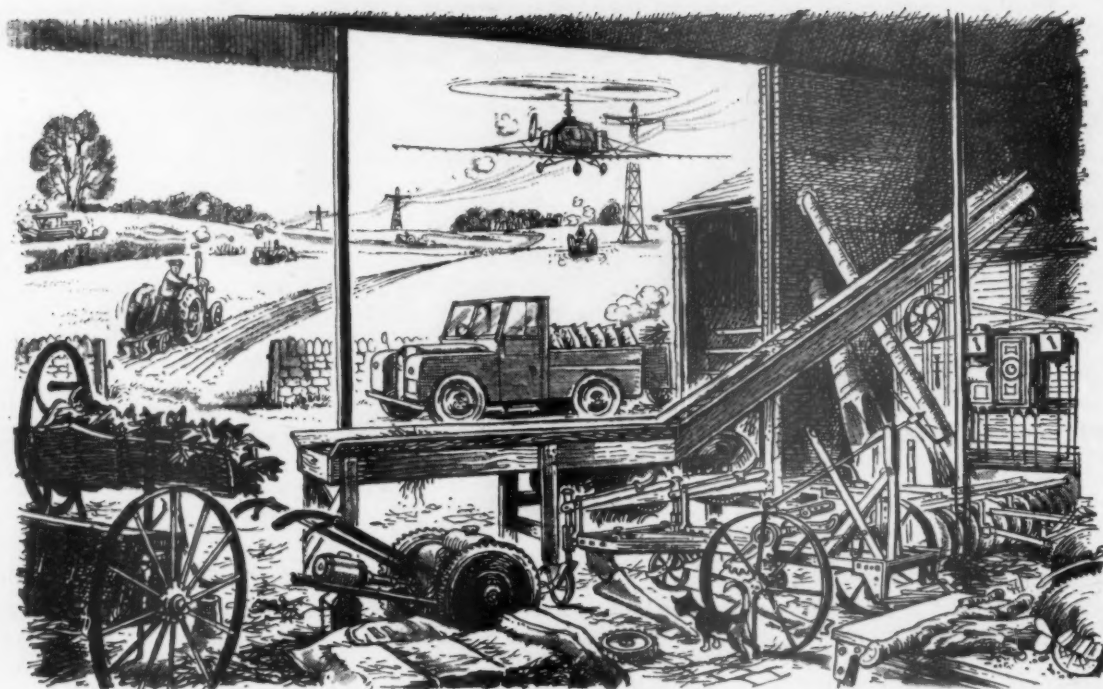


12. Warrior king with a way of his own. (8)
14. Do I wander in Arctic surroundings? Starkers! (6)
15. Take away the number you first thought of. (4)
17. Such recompense makes women wild. (7)
20. Source of sauce. (7)
22. Where sheep may safely graze. (4)
24. I go in the vessel for 8 and 9 or 10 and 11. (6)
26. The golden road but not to Samarkand. (8)
29. See on sea; worth a visit on 10 and 11. (6)
30. Such sports are never dry. (8)
31. Such a small state we are, lad, in trouble too. (8)
32. Trunks should be on 8 and 9 or 10 and 11. (6)

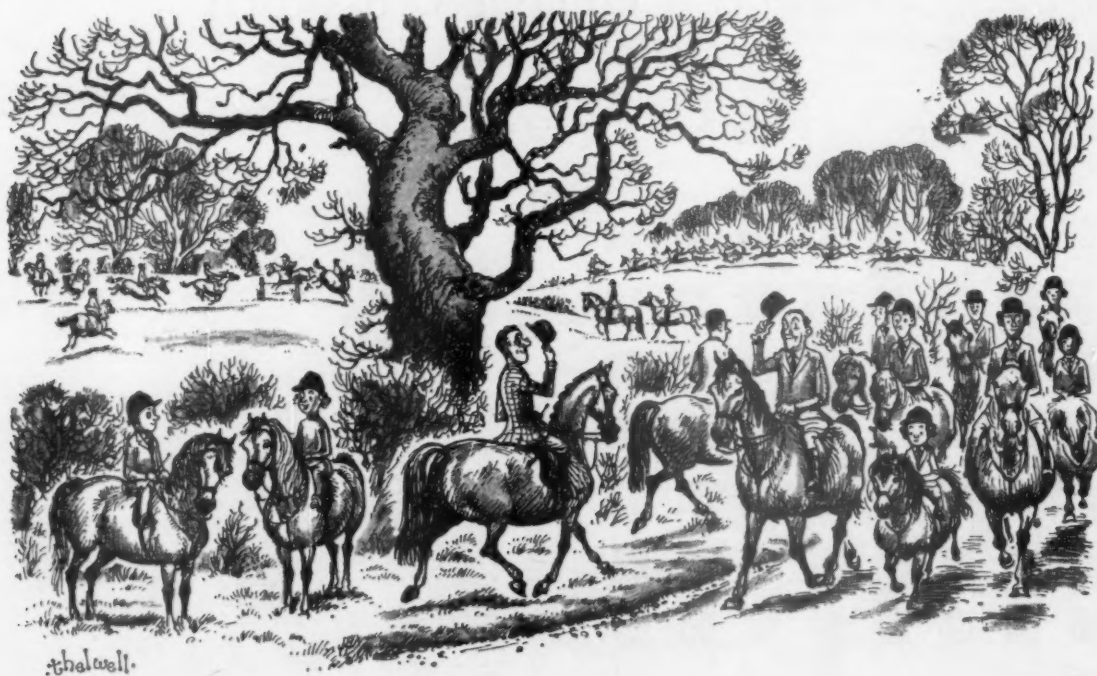
DOWN

1. First such tourist travelled by Bullman; 10 and 11 can be. (8)
2. Beaver is part of this crusader's armour. (6)
3. Poets' queen twice beheaded remains the same. (6)
4. Among the customs not recommended on 10 and 11. (7)
5. Special rather than common informer against Hamlet. (8)
6. Pisces. (8)
7. Law laid down. (6)
13. No time for the log of the 24 across. (4)
16. Mainly fussy decoration. (4)
18. High seat of power; worth a visit on 10 and 11. (8)
19. Cinerama distortion suggests a variety of 10 and 11. (8)
21. Wagons which are hitched to stars. (8)
23. Old Faithful. (7)
25. If it did 8 and 9 was not a success. (6)
27. It's a lot of trouble to take this currency on 10 and 11. (6)
28. The only sound way to return from 8 and 9 or 10 and 11. (6)

Solution next week



Increasing mechanization of the countryside is enabling more and more people to afford the luxury of owning . . .



thalwell.

. . . a horse.



In the City

Bird in Hand

WHAT is known in the insurance world as "life business," and is, in fact, primarily the business of extracting the financial sting from death, continues to expand. The insurance companies are reporting good progress for 1955: the men from the Prudential, Pearl, Norwich Union, Legal and General, Commercial Union, Northern and so on are inducing more of us to sign on the dotted line and save for rainy days and the final deluge. And this in spite of widespread anxiety about the staying power of money.

Does a life assurance policy make sense under conditions of creeping inflation? Is it prudent to exchange current income and known purchasing power for future capital of unknown purchasing power? In an age where money loses half its value every dozen years is it wise to invest in anything other than valuables, property and shares in business ventures?

At first sight the answers must be no. There is as yet no sign that the Government's promised war against inflation will be anything more than a skirmish or that world prices are ever likely to turn permanently in favour of the consumer. There is every reason to believe that to-day's pound will be worth no more than ten shillings by 1970—and quite possibly much less. Money seems to have no future.

But those who consider life insurance a snare and a delusion—and insist that monetary saving in any form is the occupation of dupes—are refusing to face facts. Inflation hits everybody. If it hit everybody alike there would be nothing to complain about. If we could all put our money into securities that hold their value in terms of purchasing power there would be no winners and no losers. But that is not possible. Inflation is undesirable very largely because there are still ways and means of by-passing it; because a handful of

people are able to invest in inflation and feather their nests at the public's expense. Those who advise against saving while they themselves seek security in industrial ordinaries are, of course, asking the community to line their pockets for them. They intend not only to contract out of the common burden of inflation but to increase their margin of advantage by quickening inflation, reducing still further the value of money and stepping up the market value of their investments.

For most people the financial hazards of the future can be tackled only by salting away income in the form of cash savings—in savings certificates, P.O., bank and building society deposits or life insurance.

Life policies are popular because they provide a safe home for savings, some

relief from the man from the tax office, immediate cover against the man with the scythe, a fair rate of interest and, where required, a share of profits. If the threat of depreciating currency remains the one deterrent to wider participation in "life business" it should be remembered that the premiums themselves may also suffer loss of real value as the policy runs its course—that the later instalments of the gross outlay will be paid in currency with a purchasing power roughly equal to that of the sum assured. Life insurance, even under conditions of controlled sneak-thieving inflation, can still confer respectable profits on the policy-holder.

And there is always the remote possibility that deflation is just around the corner.

MAMMON



In the Country

Ploughshares into Swords

FARMERS are not a particularly belligerent class. But as many of us survey our farmyards we come to the conclusion that only another war can solve our difficulties.

It is not that we yearn for a return to the potty bureaucratic rule of the County Agricultural Committees. None of us hankers for Ploughing Orders or Feeding Stuff Rations. That nightmare of fiddling spivvry and graft is well buried. But for all those inconveniences, war always brings the countryman one blessing: he is able to clear out his sheds and barns and tidy up his farmyard too and at the same time be well paid for doing it.

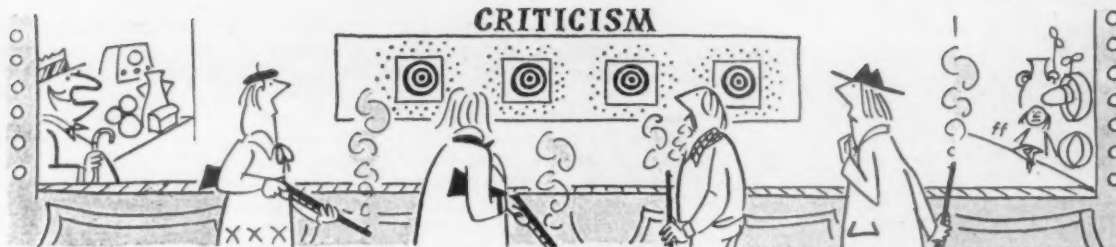
In the old days we could just manage to muddle through so long as a war came every twenty years or so. But things have changed, the march of progress on the land now means that a war is necessary at least every ten years. If one is not declared soon I for one shall not be able to crawl into any of my barns

because they are so completely stuffed with derelict machinery. There are discarded discs lying on top of abandoned ploughs, a broken tractor mounts a couple of useless harrows. And this whole clutter of rusting iron threatens to topple and engulf me. There must be at least fifty tons of scrap in the barns, not to mention the odd binder, horse-rake and corn drill which are hazardous obstacles in the yard. And every year the pile grows as we are persuaded to adopt the latest machine and discard the old one.

In the good old days of total war all we had to do when our agricultural mess entangled us in this kind of chaos was to go indoors and 'phone for the nearest scrap merchant. He would arrive promptly and with a couple of sledge-hammers, crowbars and cranes would himself lift one into tidiness again. He would even scrounge round the yard for old horse-shoes, chicken-coops and worn ploughshares. Not only did he make order out of chaos but he would weigh obstacles and then hand us a considerable amount of grubby but valid cash for the privilege of removing our impediments.

Some of us farmers are considering, now that Egypt and Israel are busily importing tanks under licences made out for tractors, whether we can't reverse the game and sell them our old Fordsons as Bren gun carriers. On a dark night they would make just as effective an ambush beside the Sea of Galilee if flanked by a pair of tyne harrows.

RONALD DUNCAN



BOOKING OFFICE

Michael Angelo Titmarsh

Thackeray: *The Uses of Adversity*, 1811-1846. Gordon N. Ray. Cumberlege: O.U.P. 35/-

I THINK the author of this able, painstaking and sympathetic account of the first half of Thackeray's life a little exaggerates Thackeray's current unpopularity as a novelist. Quite by chance I found myself abroad with a copy of *Vanity Fair* last summer, picked it up to glance through it, and in the end read it with the greatest enjoyment from cover to cover. On making inquiries on return, I found that most people held *Vanity Fair* in the highest regard. One, at least, put it in the *War and Peace* class. About the rest of Thackeray's books there may be disagreement, but *Vanity Fair* is undoubtedly an undisputed and still immensely popular classic.

Thackeray possesses that comparatively rare gift among novelists that he really knows what his characters "do." Dickens never has much idea of that. Dickens's characters are seen poetically. The moment they cease to be oppressed workhouse children, fiendish schoolmasters, feckless debtors or whatever their particular rôle, they almost cease to exist. Thackeray, on the other hand, has no poetry, but he has an exceptionally keen grasp of social and practical existence. Both novelists have an immensely powerful sense of character, but neither has much "psychology," in the modern sense; in the way that, having established the nature of their puppets, they will then ruthlessly put those puppets in quite improbable juxtaposition simply to help the story on.

Mr. Walter Allen, in one of his critical works, has said with great truth that Thackeray's trouble is that he is so good that he can be judged only beside the very best; and beside the very best there is a lack of depth that puts him at a disadvantage. The point about Thackeray is that, like all great novelists, he wrote about people whom he knew. Mr. Ray seems at

times to feel that this requires some sort of an apology. There is detectable just a hint of the stuff that used to be talked in the 'thirties to the effect that novels ought to be "significant."

It should be quickly added that there is only a hint; but a touch of priggishness (which is, after all, very difficult to keep out of biography) does suggest that all intelligent people are infinitely above anything in the way of smart parties—and the fact that Thackeray obviously

to something far more inflexible and stylized than the reality. He writes as if the social game was being played in Thackeray's time, in simple terms, between the middle class and the aristocracy; whereas, of course, it was—and, for that matter, still is—played by the infinitely complicated relationships of individuals with each other *within each class* just as much as between class and class. It is all part of the immeasurable convolutions and eccentricity of English behaviour, often expressed in class differences, but most falsely to be thought of only in such terms.

There is much acceptable detail in this book about the Anglo-Indian background of Thackeray's family, which was closely connected with the Honourable East India Company. It even appears that the novelist himself had Indian blood. Some critics have complained that there is here even too much detail. With this I do not at all agree. It seems to me of the greatest interest to hear, for example, about the background of Thackeray's wife's family. The episode involving the ex-governess at the fancy dress ball in Paris is also a sidelight not to be missed.

Thackeray emerges as an attractive and honourable man. No doubt he had his silly side, and he possessed a facetious cocksureness which may have been irritating to contemporaries. But that was a common characteristic of the period, and Thackeray's way of dealing with his really appalling troubles do him nothing but credit.

He could draw, and worked as an artist and art critic without having much idea what painting was about. Mr. Ray shows an amusing parallel between *Finnegans Wake* and *The Yellowplush Papers*; though surely it is going a little far to speak of Joyce as a "pattern novelist" of our time, even in America, where Joyce-mania has been carried to ludicrous lengths. Thackeray's connection with *Punch* (regarding which periodical Mr. Ray is not absolutely up to date) is also an entertaining part of the narrative. In short this is a book for everyone interested either in Thackeray or life in the early-nineteenth century.

ANTHONY POWELL



A self-portrait by Thackeray from *Punch* of November 4, 1848

took a keen interest in such things is regrettable. Mr. Ray writes, for example, of Becky Sharp: "The reader grows annoyed when for a brief period she is duped by the dull and proper world in which she is building herself a position . . ." This is pure copybook stuff. Becky wasn't duped. She wanted to be rich and grand; and would have been, if things had not gone wrong. Why should this not be interesting to read about?

In the same way, as an American, Mr. Ray is sometimes a bit at sea about English social life. What he says is perhaps never exactly incorrect in itself, but the general picture builds up

Roaring Boys. Edward Blishen. *Thames and Hudson*, 12/6

Mr. Blishen disguises his educational experiences as fiction, but his novel is intended to provide an accurate picture of a tough Secondary Modern School. His account of being the exhausted victim of his pupils' bullying is very funny. His descriptions of a large number of boys are both funny and sympathetic. Slowly he won enough control to make some teaching possible.

Mr. Blishen's fierce anger at the conditions that produced the hooliganism he had to deal with is too well held in. The appalling school he describes cannot be like that solely from the effects of the war on slum homes. Better councils, better administrators and better headmasters have fought back with success in some pretty bad areas. Mr. Blishen seems to think that being howled down for his first year was entirely his own fault; the change in the attitude of his pupils when they got to know him shows it was not. It is surely the responsibility of a headmaster to gain a hearing for his staff when they first arrive.

R. G. G. P.

The China Shepherdess. Félicien Marceau. *Barker*, 12/6

One of M. Marceau's subsidiary characters, a lazy and "gluttonous" reader, has "the glancing eye of a reviewer who can find, at first sight, the three lines on a page that trace the direction of the plot." Such lines play no part in the author's own method, by which the apparently arbitrary choice of incident is effectively contrasted with the care lavished on the actual writing and the construction of each separate chapter. The adventures of a precocious adolescent group, led by Marie-Jeanne, the serene and captivating "child of despair," who constantly skirts the fringes of delinquency without being, herself, corrupted, and her cousin Nicholas, intent on acquiring direct experience of life and comparing it with that which may be derived from literature, are recorded with ironic detachment and frequent flashes of farcical humour: their combination of ferocious innocence and moral nihilism recalling *Les Enfants Terribles*, with additional existentialist elements.

The lucid, poetical quality of this highly original and entertaining novel is admirably conveyed in translation by David Hughes and Marie-Jacqueline Mason.

J. M.-R.

The Capel Letters—1814-1817. Edited by the Marquess of Anglesey. *Cape*, 18/-

An aristocratic English family seeking escape from high prices at home just a few months before the opening of the Waterloo campaign pitched on Brussels, of all places, for their temporary abode. Their ideas of extreme economy not forbidding the employment of eight house-servants and all the entertaining

needed to attract Wellington's senior officers to their residence, the four sparkling elder daughters and their mother were soon in a position to smuggle Brussels lace and inside information to an adored old lady back in Surrey. Here are their letters to her.

From such a build-up much excitement might be expected, and indeed for a few pages the fervour of the battle at their garden gates is reflected pretty briskly, but otherwise this is little more than a social record of the period. As such it is fascinatingly familiar, for in the unashamed delicious snobbery and worship of wealth no less than in the delicate precision of phrase one hears the exact tones of Fitzwilliam Darcy and Emma Woodhouse. These were the very people about whom Jane Austen was writing.

C. C. P.

Richard the Third. Paul Murray Kendall. *Allen and Unwin*, 30/-

Only an American professor could engage himself in a clean fight over Richard III and produce a biography, as distinct from an argument; which is not to say that Mr. Kendall is without a point of view. The result of this most impressive research into the villainies of a legendary horror may well create a certain unease in those who journey from the Tower to the Princes' bones in Westminster Abbey unhampered by thoughts of good for Richard. Quite definitely Mr. Kendall takes the edge off one *rudely stamp*, presenting his case with determined and detailed benevolence, pruning all the wicked Tudor prejudice to an extent which leaves a sense of loss. Mr. Kendall's scholarly pertinacity is morally and factually admirable, yet English history appears in a lesser light when traitors are not allowed to triumph.

Curiously enough Mr. Kendall's cushioned monotone revives when he sternly describes Henry VII's iniquities. Could it be that justice for its own sake holds no enchantment? Lengthy appendices enable Richard enthusiasts to work out the whole case back to traditional villainy, which shows that Mr. Kendall has not laboured in vain—his generous documentation allows everyone to join in the game of finding the true Richard.

K. D.

The First Fifty Years of the Rhodes Trust. *Blackwell*, 27/6

Although produced for domestic consumption, this cheering account of the history of the Rhodes Trust and its scholars will interest anyone interested in the history of the twentieth century. Lord Elton gives the general account. The late Sir Francis Wylie, in much the best-written contribution, describes the first thirty years in Oxford. Sir Carleton Allen brings the story of Rhodes House and Oxford up to date and edits a collection of records and statistics, with interesting details of the later careers of



"You, Maugham, Churchill, Gilbert Murray . . . why, all the really fascinating men are over eighty, Mr. Willis."

Rhodes Scholars. Dr. Frank Aydelotte deals with the American scholarships.

Some of the detail about the superstructure, with General Secretaries and Oxford Secretaries and Overseas Secretaries and Committees and service of outstanding devotion by administrators may seem a little over-serious to the outsider; the selection of three thousand men spread over half a century is made to sound the equal of the work of the Red Cross or the International Labour Office. The illustrations include Milner, Amery, Geoffrey Dawson and Lothian: one wonders about the historical results of the connection between the Rhodes Trust and what *The Spectator* enjoys calling "The Establishment."

R. G. G. P.

The Wreck of the Golden Mary. Charles Dickens and Wilkie Collins. *Arthur Barker*, 9/6

This is not an important contribution to letters. It first appeared in the 1856 Christmas number of *Household Words*, and it seems evident that neither author took much trouble with it. It is not even a true collaboration, but rather a game of consequences; of the three chapters Dickens wrote the first, and Collins finished the tale.

But though Dickens could write slickly, his imagination never slept. The virtuous sea-captain, though too good to be true, is nevertheless alive; we would know him again anywhere. The miser who when shipwrecked concerns himself with the safety of a little girl—only because Providence is more likely to save a boat containing one innocent soul—is an amusing grotesque.

After Dickens had described the shipwreck Collins added a chapter of short magazine stories, as told by survivors to pass time in the boats; and a perfunctory account of the rescue. The result pleased the readers of *Household Words*, and to-day will please the curious.

A. L. D.



AT THE PLAY

Exhibition of Juvenile Drama
(VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM)

THE miserably laconic vocabulary of our theatre managers is much to be regretted. In 1822 they still retained the power of language. Take this, from a playbill at the Royal Coburg (ancestor of the Old Vic) in that year:

"To the Public."

The success and attraction of Edward the Black Prince has fully justified the Conductor of this Theatre in his Appreciation of the Public Taste; and the liberality of his Patrons has exceeded his most sanguine anticipations, while it stimulates him to further efforts. In passing from the Brightest to the Darkest Events of our Annals, from the Glories of 1356 to the Treasons of 1605, it has been his endeavour to illustrate the opposite Character of the Times and of the Personages connected with them, by the same rigid Attention to Costume and Topographical correctness, which has reflected so much credit on the distinguished Artists of this Establishment. On the merits of the New Piece he forbears to descant, but confidently submits

'GUY FAWKES'

or 'THE GUNPOWDER TREASON!' to the Candour of that Public who have crowned his former Endeavour with such gratifying Approbation."

At the time this was probably considered a very fine example of British understatement. It forms an engaging extra in the fascinating exhibition of Juvenile Drama at the Victoria and Albert Museum. For nearly sixty years Mr. M. W. Stone has played the magpie to everything to do with Penny Plain, Tuppence Coloured, and now he has generously given his collection, invaluable to the stage historian, to the

V. and A., where a chronological sifting covers the walls of one room.

The sheets are extremely decorative. Their origin was the eighteenth-century habit of adding a frontispiece portrait to the printed play. Robert Dighton was first in the new field, with coloured portraits of popular actors and actresses in famous rôles; closely detailed, they sold simply as souvenirs. We find Sarah Siddons (1799), clad in a bath-robe with an old curtain slung round her, declaiming "Hold! Pizarro—hear me! if not always JUSTLY, at least act always GREATLY!" at a wonderfully unconcerned John Kemble. A little later we find Macready as Rob Roy, Kean as Othello (his calves bulging ominously); and, playing Francis I, a Mr. Serle, whose trim moustache, small black beard and oratorical posture



seem curiously familiar. Also, Grimaldi, armed to the teeth.

The souvenir went on for some time, enriched by French P.o.W.s after Waterloo, who introduced the tinselled portrait. The first genuine Juvenile Drama sheets were issued about 1810 when four characters were printed on a single sheet, no doubt used and coloured by children although still serving as souvenirs. As late as 1817 the two lines still ran parallel, but already actors' names were disappearing from the children's sheets. Since from the beginning a coloured sheet cost twopence, infant labour was obviously at work. The originator of simplified texts for the miniature theatre was probably Hodgson. If the play in question had been successful, the adaptation had to be made at the gallop; in the case of *The Secret Mine*, one of the earliest examples, beautifully painted sheets and a script in copperplate long-hand, with souvenir plates in colour, were on sale complete only twelve days after the first night at Covent Garden.

At this exhibition much can be learned



about Georgian productions. Often sets are elaborately architectural, as in a Cruikshank sheet for *Charles the Second*. Webb's plates of Edmund Kean's *Hamlet* show characters who would be titter-proof to-day, except for Miss Kelly's Ophelia, evidently on the wrong side of sixty and very startled to find herself on a stage (none of the actresses seems to have had any fear of the gallery; Mrs. Waylett, playing Apollo in *Midas*, staggered under a load of golden bric-à-brac which included a gigantic sun suspended uncomfortably in her bosom).

About 1835 Skelt and others shook the market with Ha'penny Plain, Penny Coloured, and soon afterwards production grew enormously to satisfy the huge demands of the Victorian nursery. Portraiture went out, stylized actions came in, but artists still showed signs of having gone to the live theatre, mainly for melodramas and pantos to reproduce in unashamedly bold colours.

One of the surprises one comes away with is that Georgian players never adopted what might be called a normal conversational stance. The men, violently bent at one knee as if fencing, appear to be delivering clarion calls to unseen supporters, while the women—excessively décolletées but after that swathed in any number of nightgowns—are nearly always pirouetting on invisible skates. It must, in those days, have been a very tiring profession.

ERIC KEOWN



AT THE GALLERY



National Museum of Wales
Agnew's

42 Old Bond Street, W.1 (Closes Feb. 4)
Modern Art in the United States
Tate Gallery (Closes Feb. 12)

THE unusual distinction of The National Museum of Wales Collection, formed only in 1907, is largely due to the foresight of the late Miss Gwendoline Davies, one of whose Cézannes (No. 38 in this exhibition), was hanging in the Tate as early as 1926. Her other bequests and gifts to the

Museum include two more Cézannes, two Monets, two Manets, three Daumiers, one Van Gogh, and two Renoirs, besides, appropriately, a number of canvases by Augustus John and two by J. D. Innes.

It sometimes happens that a particular picture is so happily placed in a certain position in a gallery, having regard to its size, background, and neighbours, that it dominates a show. Renoir's full-length "Parisienne" does this at Agnew's; situated at the end of the long gallery, its overall blueness contrasting wonderfully well with the dark maroon wall, and flanked by two fine but much darker Wilsons. (This Renoir was shown as lately as 1953 at the Tate on a lighter wall.) The picture (painted in 1874 when Renoir was thirty-four) is prevented from being a rather too blue monochrome by the judicious use of a little brown, vermilion, and yellow. This is in accord with the practice of the past except that masters such as Rubens, Gainsborough or Reynolds would have based their monochromes on a less positive tint such as umber or grey. In contrast to the apparent ease of execution of the Renoir, the Cézanne still-life seems almost worked to a standstill; but not so his fine painting of pines, or the original Tate Gallery landscape.

At present artists, like domestic servants, seem to have got things all their own way. You must like or lump what they bring to the table. The New York Gallery of Modern Art could not, I regret to say, show a novel exhibit from a neighbouring United States museum of equal repute, consisting of a sheet of plate or Perspex glass shattered by a brick or car. A good few "accidentals" (bearing little trace of the human hand) appear to be here all the same. A lengthy preface endeavours to explain them. One thing which seems unquestionable is that the old-fashioned national chefs (see Agnew's above) gave and received pleasure of a vastly better quality than the cosmopolitan dehumanized exhibitors at the Tate.

ADRIAN DAINTRY

AT THE PICTURES

The Girl in the Red Velvet Swing
Les Fruits de l'Été

FROM the title you might expect a musical comedy; but no, *The Girl in the Red Velvet Swing* (Director: RICHARD FLEISCHER) is period drama, founded on fact, about the celebrated U.S. murder case of 1906, when Harry K. Thaw—now, though I suppose not then, to be described as "millionaire playboy"—shot dead the architect Stanford White in a crowded restaurant.

So much is undisputed fact, but there will continue to be argument about motives. According to this version, Thaw, long afflicted with a sort of persecution mania concerning White,



Evelyn Nesbit—JOAN COLLINS

Stanford White—RAY MILLAND

whom he found forestalling him in various more or less trivial ways, was finally driven over the edge into homicidal insanity by the thought that his wife, Evelyn Nesbit, had been White's mistress. The whole thing is made somewhat more difficult for the groundlings by the fact that White and Thaw are played respectively by RAY MILLAND and FARLEY GRANGER, both of whom they are accustomed to regard with some sympathy as heroic characters. However, as the title implies, the personage most emphasized and the one who in a way comes best out of the whole affair is Evelyn, played—quite well, too—by our own JOAN COLLINS. (This perhaps was only to be expected, considering that the woman in the case is the only one of the three protagonists alive to-day.)

My tone may seem disrespectful, but the film is well done and I found it continuously interesting. The period is most effectively suggested, even though there are certain things—the shape of the men's bow ties, for example—that are somewhat adapted so as to look less odd to a modern audience; and given these characters—whether they are anything like the real men concerned or not—I think Messrs. MILLAND and GRANGER portray them very satisfactorily. Among the small-part people is GLENDA FARRELL, who is first-rate as Evelyn's anxious mother. Never mind whether it's true; it's quite intelligently entertaining. (The swing, by the way—if you were wondering—is one copied "from a painting by Watteau" and installed by White in a conservatory where Evelyn rides on it.)

The Fruits of Summer, or *Les Fruits de l'Été* (Director: RAYMOND BERNARD) is technically a "French bedroom farce" only because—in the last half-hour or so

—there is a certain amount of routine foolery in and out of hotel bedrooms; it does not depend on this, and there is much more in it than such empty mechanics. There may be the bones of what on the English stage would be a bedroom farce, but since this is a French film the people, the places, the atmosphere have character and charm. The story is not edifying (it is an "X" film), but you don't have to take it seriously; the thing is an enjoyable trifle.

The basis of the plot is that the eighteen-year-old daughter of a beautiful mother finds herself pregnant out of wedlock, and the mother decides to save the situation by making what the synopsis calls "a fresh conquest" of her husband, who is something of a public figure, and persuading him that the child is hers and his. This at first sight dubious theme is worked out with lightness and ingenuity and decorated with much satirically amusing incident and detail (the young people's party, the international conference, the speech on television); moreover the mother is played by EDWIGE FEUILLÈRE. Quite an attractive little picture, and very good fun; I enjoyed it.

Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

Outstanding among the new ones is RENÉ CLAIR's *Les Grandes Manœuvres*, or *Summer Manœuvres*; another important one is *The Man With the Golden Arm*. More about these next week. *Richard III* (28/12/55) and *The Fiends*, or *Les Diaboliques* (14/12/55) continue.

Top release: the very enjoyable *Josephine and Men* (23/11/55). *Mister Roberts* is highly entertaining, a field day for JAMES CAGNEY.

RICHARD MALLETT



ON THE AIR

The Importance of Being Earnest

THE "documentary" is probably TV's most important contribution to intelligent entertainment. It is one of the very few items that are incomparably better seen than heard; it cannot be satisfactorily mounted in the theatre or distributed by the cinemas. A good documentary has all the interest of an informed magazine article, the controversial ebullience of an expert Brains Trust and the excitement of a staged thriller. It can say more in five minutes than a Third Programme don in fifty, and say it with greater authority, eloquence and effect. It has the priceless gifts of immediacy, topicality, liveliness and contention. If its subject matter is sufficiently newsy it also makes sense of that awkward jargon expression "audience participation."

We have recently been treated to two documentaries of considerable importance and wide appeal—one from the B.B.C., the other on Channel 9. "Tin Pan Alley," the first in Associated-Rediffusion's series entitled *Big City*, was a commendable attempt to marry inquiry and "pops" or standard I.T.A. fare; Ted Willis's writing is crisp and knowledgeable, and Caryl Doncaster, B.B.C.-trained, has the knack of mixing galvanizing social comment and relaxing illustration in the most telling and acceptable proportions. If Miss Doncaster is given her head *Big City* should help the I.T.A. to live down its well-deserved reputation for slumming.

The B.B.C.'s *Woman Alone*, written by Colin Morris and produced by Gilchrist Calder, was intended as an



JACQUELINE MACKENZIE

IAN CARMICHAEL

exposition of the problems confronting unmarried mothers, and went to work with startling boldness, with shrieks and moans and padded maternity dresses and some ribaldry. In my view this programme—while interesting enough as a "shocker"—failed to throw any light whatever on the social implications of maternity out of wedlock.

In its afternoon programmes for women the B.B.C. has been supporting the obstetricians in their efforts to promote a healthier and less fearful attitude to childbirth, but in this documentary the lessons were all forgotten.

The programme said much less than it should have done about adoption, and choosing its words for dramatic effect rather than enlightenment left viewers under the unfortunate impression that foster parents are forever examining their charges for signs of original sin and transmitted deficiencies of character. Documentaries are powerful instruments of propaganda and when they fail to

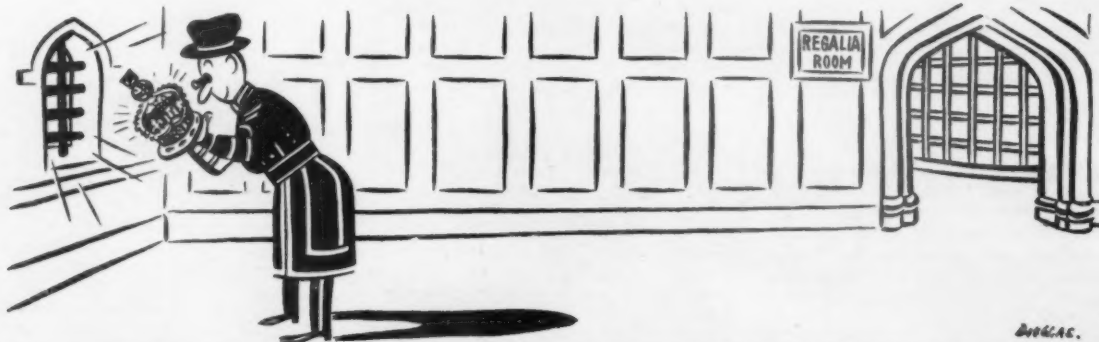
deliver balanced judgments they can cause much harm and suffering.

Jack Payne's popular "Off the Record" series has been aerated by an admixture of comedy. In a recent issue the parade of disc warblers (there are really not enough of them to keep the programme running) was interrupted by some clever clowning from Ian Carmichael, a young man who presents conventional buffoonery in a new and decidedly pleasing manner. With sufficient encouragement he may well discover original outlets for his talent. There is room in the TV programmes for more light reporting, for more of the bitter-sweet brand of humour that Jacqueline Mackenzie manages so well on her incursions into "Highlight."

I have the greatest respect for the pedagogic skill of Dobson and Young. During the war their lectures on the elementary appreciation of music were spectacularly and deservedly successful. Their revolutionary classroom tactics broke through the obstinacy and obtuseness of people hitherto regarded as unteachable, and invoked a love of music in the unlikelyst breasts. Now they are back on television with a series called "Music Opens the Door," and I regret to say that their performance is a terrible disappointment.

Their act has become unbearably stodgy. Dobson talks incessantly in a voice both rasping and unctuous. His drolleries are not droll, his pictorial props are an affront to television and his musical illustrations are few and far between. I cannot help thinking that Dobson and Young have lost their missionary zeal and are now content to exploit a faded, outmoded technique.

BERNARD HOLLOWOOD



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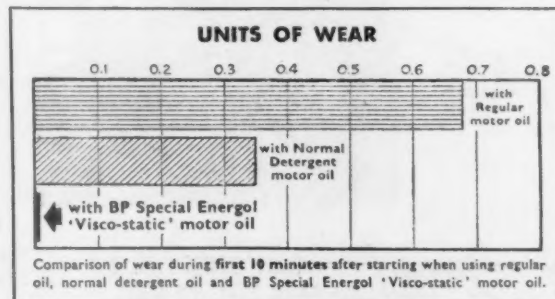
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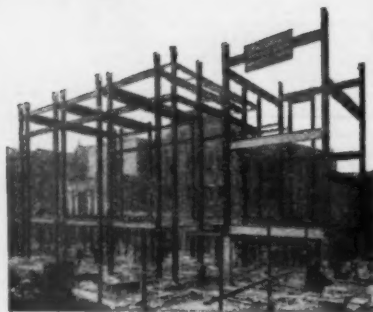
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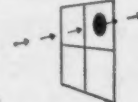
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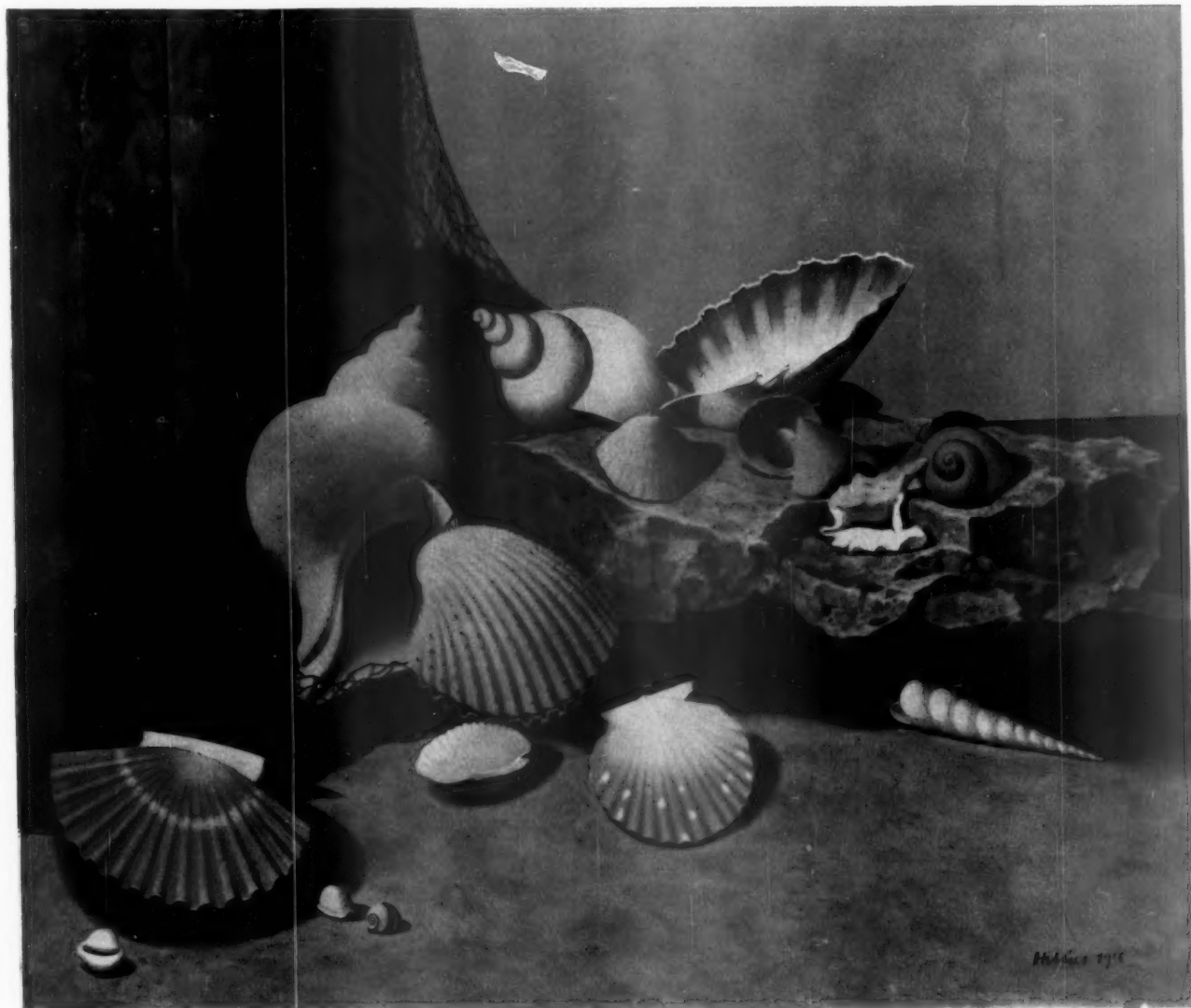
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Shell Nature Studies 13 SHELLS

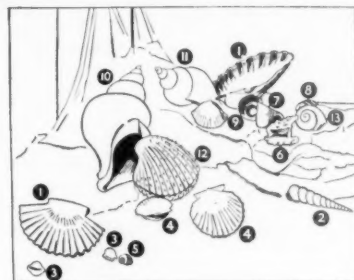
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Shells such as you find on your seaside holiday have intrigued mankind for more than 20,000 years. Our ancestors of the Old Stone Age ornamented themselves with SCALLOPS (1), little AUGER SHELLS (2), and cowries—though larger kinds than the tiny COWRIES (3) of Britain.

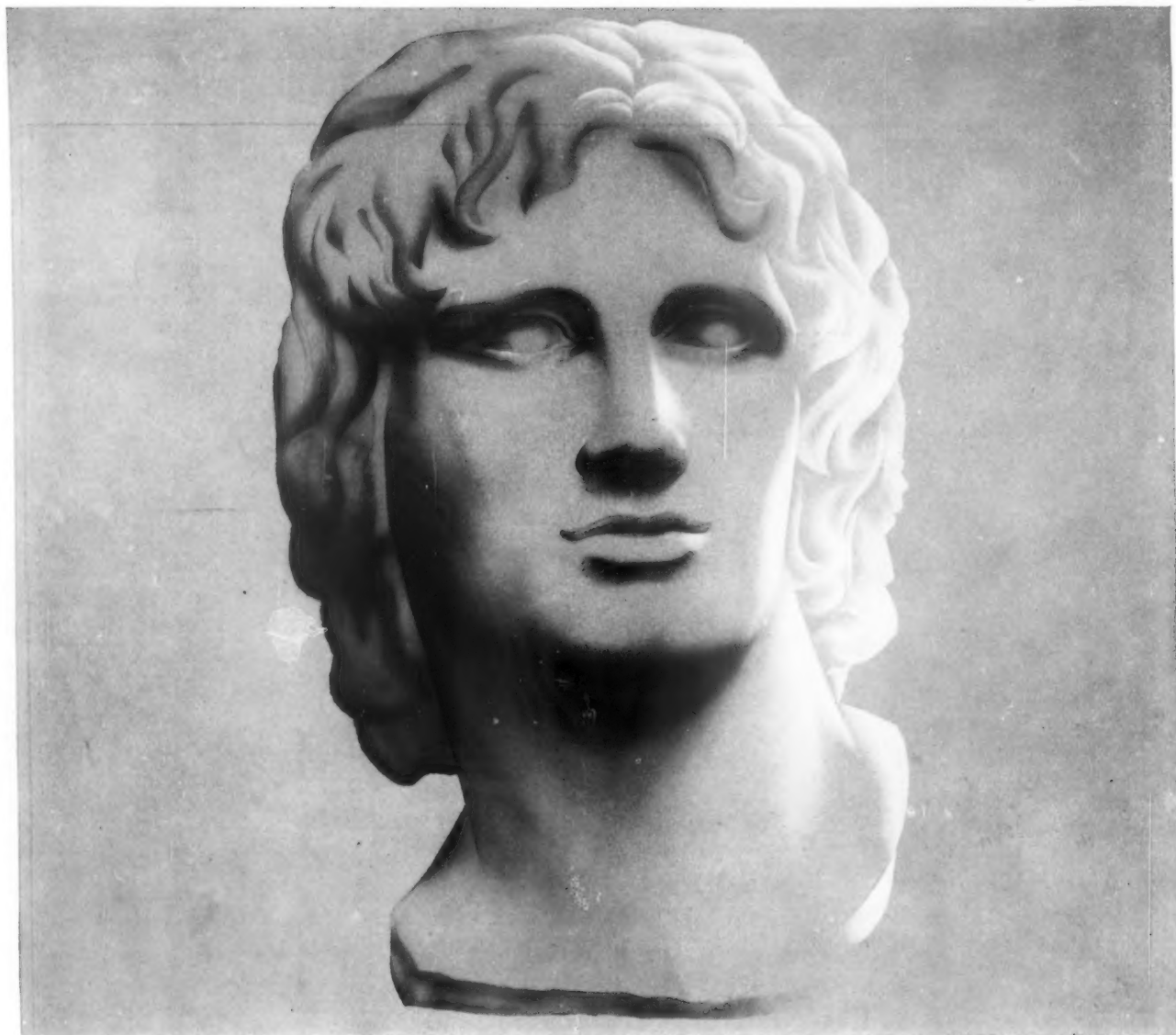
Among our prettiest and commonest shells are QUEENS (4) and PERIWINKLES (5), which both vary greatly in colour. Odder shaped are the PELICAN'S FOOT (6), the PAINTED TOP SHELL (7), and the MARBLED COAT-OF-MAIL (8), one of a family like miniature armadillos. Everyone knows LIMPET SHELLS (9), on and off the rock. Other kinds are local. Only on the wild north-eastern coasts will you find the WIDE-MOUTHED WHELK (10), larger cousin of the common WHELK or BUCKIE (11). Cockles have a less familiar relative, the SPINY COCKLE (12) abundant on the sands of South Devon.

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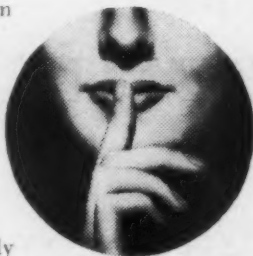
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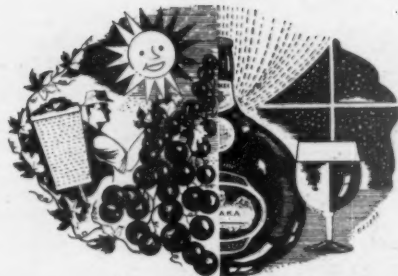
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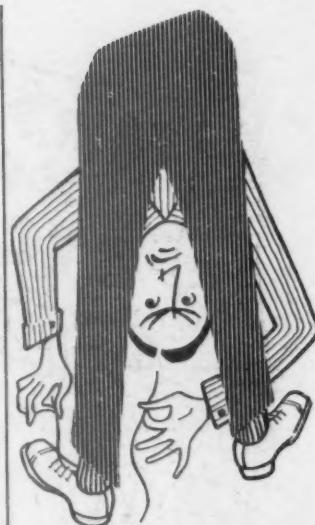
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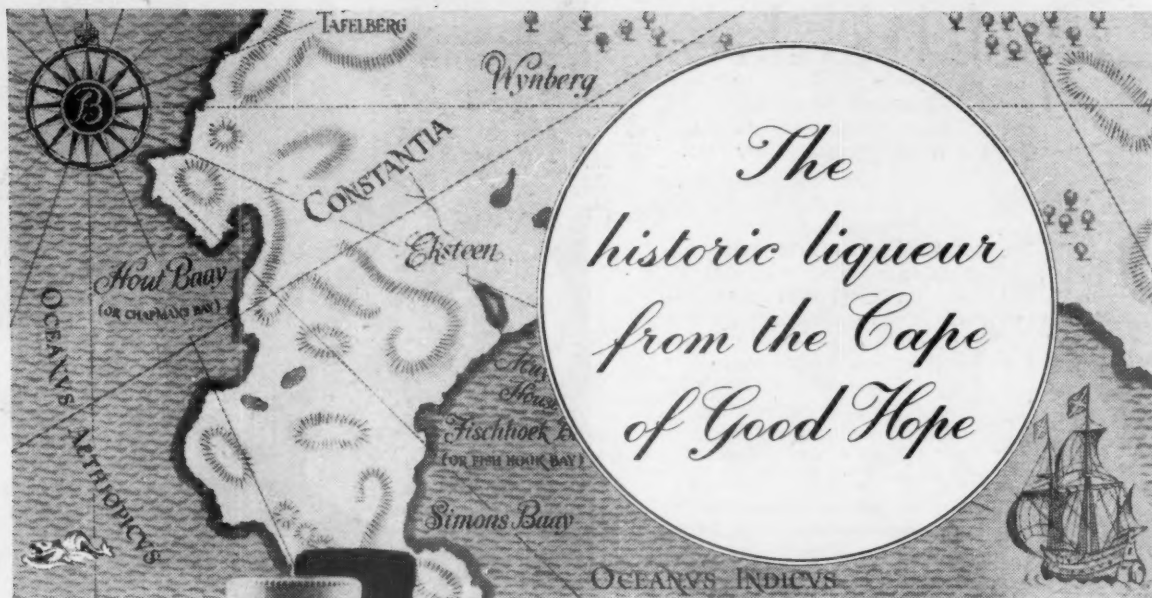
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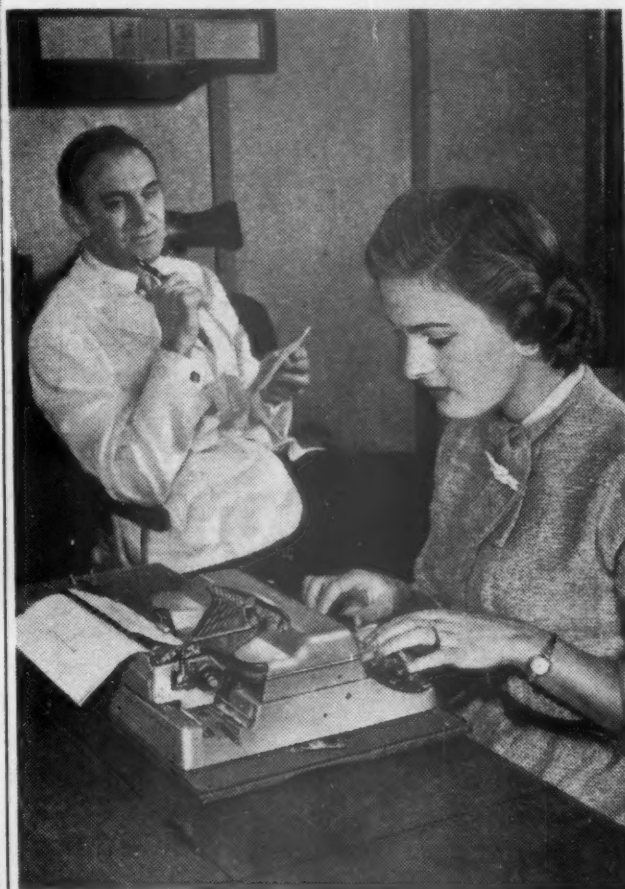
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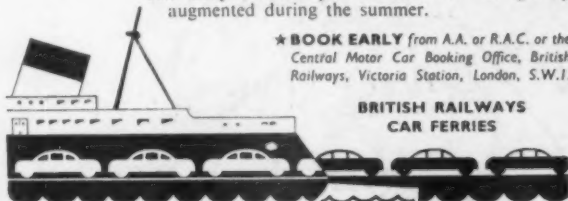


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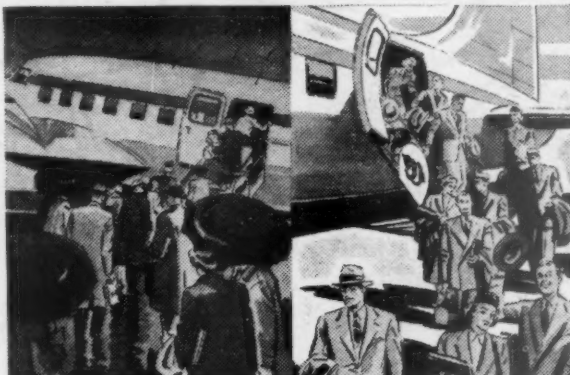
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	m.p.h.	m.p.g.	m.p.h.	m.p.g.
HUMBER HAWK	37.2	22.84	37.85	27.54
JENSEN 541	43.33	22.43	41.10	29.04
ROVER 90	37.84	26.01	37.06	31.22
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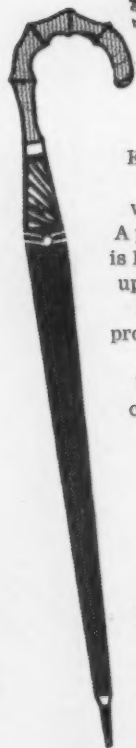
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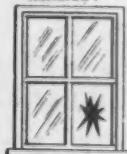


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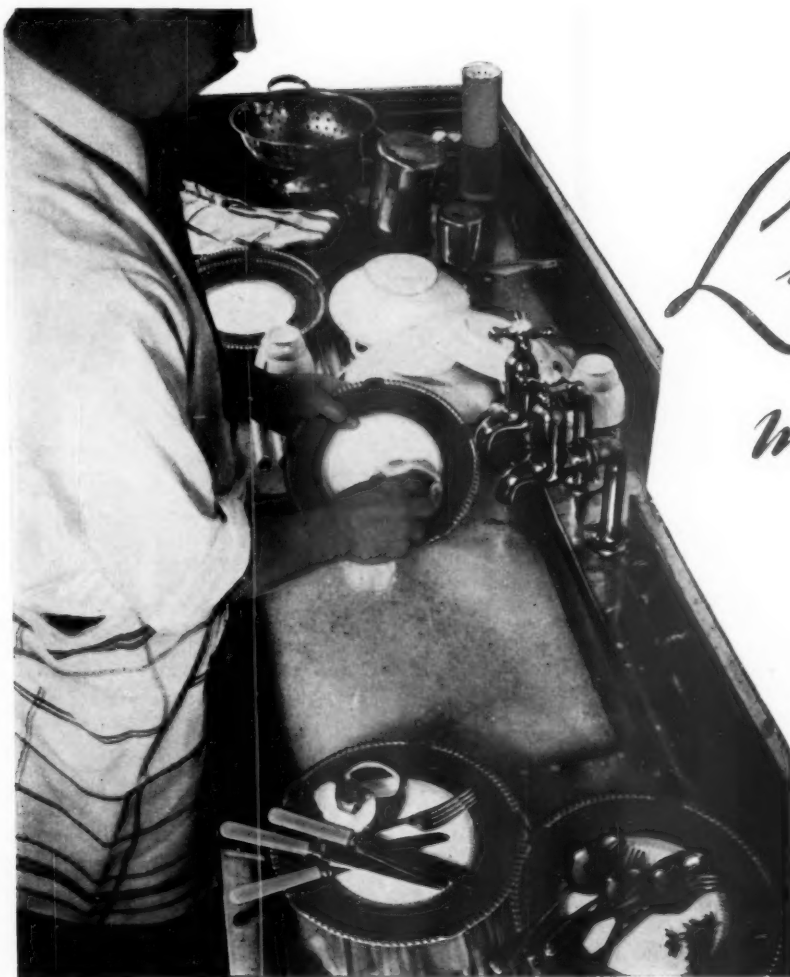
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'Stand Fast is known all over the world. I once wrote a 'purple passage' about it, and I think at the time I said Grants stand fast all over the world, just as their whisky does.'

**This conversation between Sir Compton Mackenzie and Sir Robert Bruce Lockhart was recorded at Sir Compton's Edinburgh home*

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